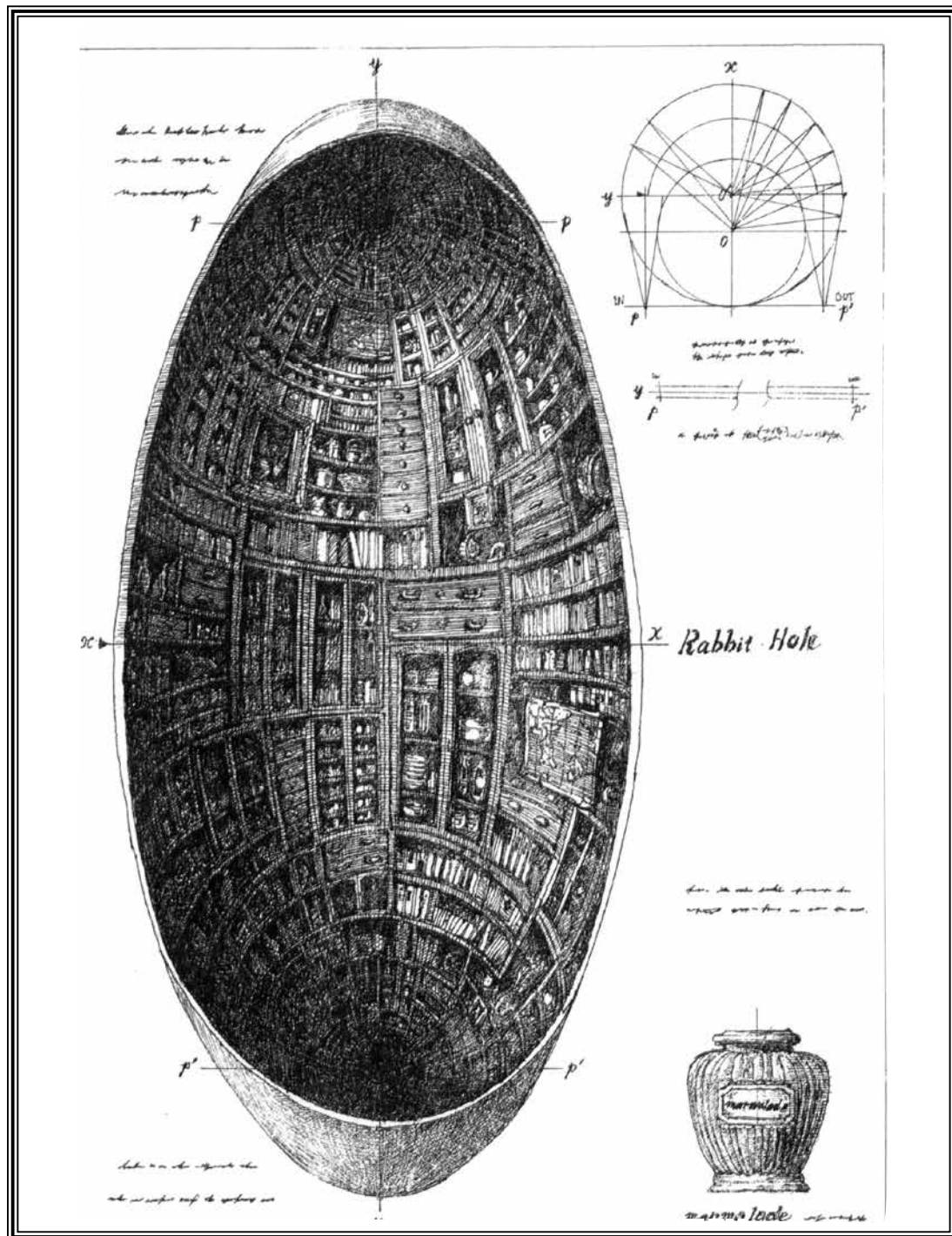


K N I G H T L E T T E R

The Lewis Carroll Society of North America



The *Knight Letter* is the official magazine of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America,
a literary society whose purpose is to encourage study and appreciation
of the life, work, times, and influence of Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson),
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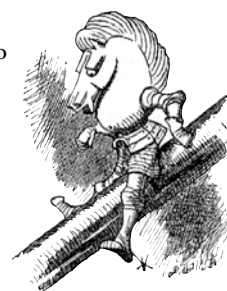
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On the cover: "Blueprint for a Rabbit Hole" by Tomomi Sakuba, from his 不思議の国のアリス
(Alice in Wonderland, *Shinjusha*, 1987)



CONTENTS

THE RECTORY UMBRELLA

<i>Moving Pictures and Conversations</i>	1
<i>LCSNA Virtual Events</i>	8
MARK BURSTEIN & RAY KIDDY	
<i>Humpty Dumpty in Czarytorium</i>	13
DANUTA RADOMSKA-FILIPEK	
<i>The Hunting of the WHAT?</i>	16
DANUTA RADOMSKA-FILIPEK	
<i>I'm Not Married to This, But . . .</i>	18
ROBERT WATKINS	
<i>Poetry Quoted in the Sylvie and Bruno Books</i>	28
LISA BUDD	
<i>The 2023 Wonderland Awards</i>	29
MICAELA RODGERS	
<i>The Queen's Gambit: Paint the Roses</i>	30
SARAH K. CROTZER	

MISCHMASCH

<i>Leaves from the Deanery Garden— Serendipity—Sic, Sic, Sic</i>	34
<i>Ravings from the Writing Desk</i>	38
ARNOLD HIRSHON	
<i>Illustrator Spotlight: Ksenia Lavrova</i>	39
MARK BURSTEIN	
<i>In Memoriam: Donald Rackin</i>	42
EDWARD GUILIANO	
<i>In Memoriam: Kenn Outram</i>	43
SELWYN GOODACRE	
<i>Alice in Advertising-Land</i>	44
DAYNA NUHN LOZINSKI	

CARROLLIAN NOTES

<i>Alice's Adventures in CluedUppland</i>	46
JIM GUIDA	
<i>Wonderland Dreams Are Made of This</i>	46
GRIFFIN MILLER	

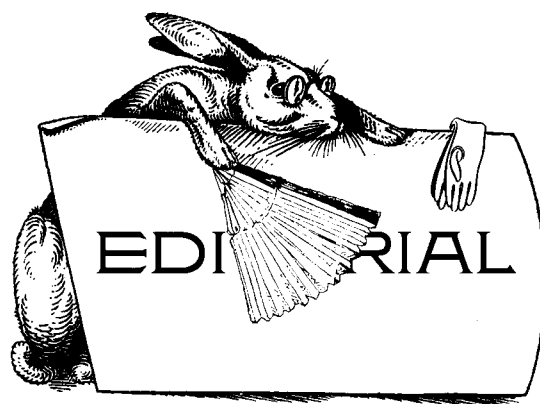
<i>Nello Specchio di Alice: Il Sé e l'Altro</i>	48
STEFANIA TONDO	
<i>Encountering Alice in Japan</i>	48
AMANDA KENNEL	
<i>SurréAlice</i>	50
ILARIA CREMASCHINI	

OF BOOKS AND THINGS

<i>Into a Strange Land</i>	52
Аліса в Країні Див (AW), <i>ill. Inna Maslyak</i>	52
YVONNE KACY	
Алиса в Стране чудес (AW), <i>Butromeev</i>	52
DMITRY YERMOLOVICH	
<i>Alice in Wonderland: A Series of Drawings</i>	54
ANDREW OGUS	
<i>Run Towards the Danger</i>	54
ROSE OWENS	
<i>Alice in Wonderland, ill. Paolo Barbieri</i>	55
ANDREW OGUS	
<i>A través del espejo (LG), ill. Sozapato</i>	55
YVONNE KACY	
<i>Russian, Ukrainian AW & LG, ill. Zin'ko</i>	56
ANDREW OGUS	
<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, ill. Hanna</i>	57
YVONNE KACY	
爱丽丝漫游奇境记 (AW), <i>ill. Sotés</i>	58
YVONNE KACY	
<i>Gallery</i>	59

FROM OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

<i>Art & Illustration—Articles & Academia— Auctions—Books—Comics & Graphic Novels—Events, Exhibits, & Places—Internet & Technology—Movies & Television—Music—Performing Arts—Things</i>	60
<i>The Funny Pages</i>	62



*"The thing can be done," said the Butcher, "I think.
The thing must be done, I am sure.
The thing shall be done! Bring me paper and ink,
The best there is time to procure."*

That is somewhat the spirit in which I once again attempt to guide this hoary brigantine—"What on earth was the helmsman to do?"—although it is, of course, dependent on our fine crew, from article authors, reviewers, and regular columnists to those who simply send us notice of some new book or event or sighting or what-have-you, not to mention our excellent designer, Andrew Ogus; our gifted copyeditor, Devra Kunin; our eagle-eyed proofreader Sarah Adams-Kiddy; and my courageous editorial associate, Ray Kiddy. It does my heart good to see eight brand-new bylines in this issue; welcome, welcome! Although none of their names begins with a "B," I have nonetheless now entwined my finger in their hair, tingling my bell.

'Tis a changing time in which we live, as social media begin to usurp newspapers; AI replaces friends, therapists, and talent; cars drive themselves (although

no one goes to the office anymore); and most of our meetings take place on devices in our homes rather than collegially. Yet we plod along, pressing ink into paper, knowing that it will always and forever be readable, something that cannot be said for any electronic medium or format.

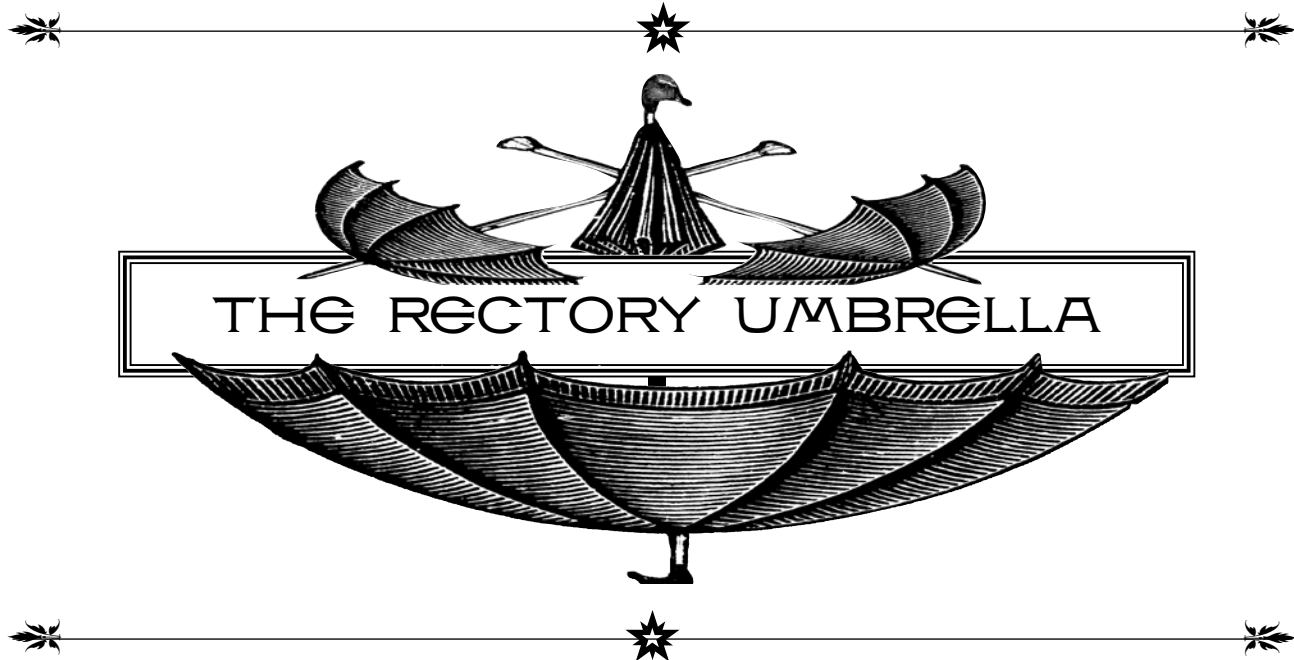
I saw my first computer in 1958; my uncle worked at Argonne National Laboratory. It took up an entire underground bunker and probably had a hundred-trillionth of the computing power of a smartphone today.

"Oh, skip your dear uncle!"

With the exception of a few years here and there, I've been doing something along these lines for the *Knight Letter* since issue 49, dated Spring 1995, an eight-page newsletter set by PageMaker software in the days of 3½-inch, 720kb floppy disks. On January 27 of that year, Joel Birenbaum officially opened the Lewis Carroll Home Page, one of around 3,000 websites; today there are 1.13 billion. Even Google was three years away.

Yet Alice endures. So will the *Knight Letter*, even if the online version seems skeuomorphic. And now I await the Beaver, bringing me paper, portfolio, pens, and ink in unfailing supplies.

MARK BURSTEIN



MOVING PICTURES *and Conversations*

Our Spring 2023 all-day-and-half-the-night meeting, VirtuAlice V, took place on April 15 online via Zoom, hosted by the wondrous Heather Simmons, our VP, chair of the Senior Common Room Curators,¹ podcaster,² and sole organizer of the conference. Titled “Lights! Camera! Carroll!”, its theme was film adaptations, a subject in which she is well qualified, having graduated from film school back when.

Heather welcomed us to the LCSNA Cineplex and then, nostalgically evoking the moviegoing experience from the Thirties and Forties, began the show with a newsreel and a cartoon.³ This environment was delightfully reinforced by closing credits for each segment and a trailer for “Part II: Alice Strikes Back,” not to mention the movie-themed playlist that played during the breaks and the way folks were urged to go to the lobby for a treat at the first intermission.

Part I: “Beyond Alice—A New Hope” began with a very special treat. Originally slated to play at the first International Lewis Carroll Conference in Oxford in 1989 and scrapped due to projection problems [*KL* 33:3], Swiss director Tiziana Caminada’s superb 18-minute film *Phantasmagoria* has remained largely unseen for the last 34 years.⁴

The short was Tiziana’s final film-school project. She did not spend the intervening years just pining for us; she continued her career working for Swiss television,

and then as a documentary filmmaker. The only copy of this movie sat in a can, in a corner, waiting. Luckily, a heroic effort, spearheaded by Heather, was made to resurrect and restore the film and copy it to digital media.⁵

Cindy Watter gave a brief primer about the poem itself,⁶ which she had presented to us about at our Fall 2018 meeting (*KL* 101:3), to introduce the screening. One has to say that the film is not an “accurate” retelling of the poem. The movie adds a niece to highlight the initial surliness of the narrator—here presumed to be Mr. Dodgson—and show his lack of a generous character. The film also adds a mathematical equation solved and a chess game played. But some works, if translated directly to film, will come out as less than they should. Taking liberties with a work may be the only way to be faithful to its “spirit,” so to speak, and “Phantasmagoria” may be one such work. The film has the same light-hearted ridiculousness as the poem. The actors were well chosen and both the narrator and the ghost—the same actress was also his niece—are quite well played. It was nice to see a dedicated Carrollian, Alexandre Révérend, playing Gaspard, the French-speaking manservant. Production values were very, very high; in fact, in the after-discussion with Tiziana and Cindy, it was revealed that Peter O’Toole came very close to playing Dodgson! By not compulsively sticking to the same story elements, the movie gave us the surprise and delight of the poem, quite faithful to its temperament. It was enormously

Tiziana Caminada



Cindy Watter

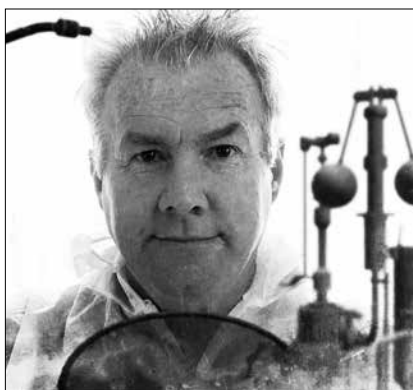


well received and then published on YouTube the next day!⁷ We are delighted that this long-lost gem will find its audience thirty-some years after it was made.

The feast of cinematic delectables continued with Simon DaVison's *The Hunting of the Snark*, a superbly witty ninety-minute version of the original poem, with wonderful theological and philosophical additions. The film is presented as an adventure quest in the vein of Edgar Rice Burroughs's *The Land That Time Forgot* or Jules Verne's *Mysterious Island*. The setting is a lush tropical island full of the most varied natural life, both real, such as the abundance of insects, and imaginary, like the characters from Carroll's novels—with numerous Easter eggs hidden throughout; the game is to watch the film several times to try to find them all.

The soundtrack and the music are very atmospheric, lending a verisimilitude to an absolutely fantastical subject, a juxtaposition that Carroll would appreciate. Visuals are very cleverly done: a mixture of Victorian steampunk seen in the Ontolophone machine, the Fumigador, and the graphics, with the conundrums of the poem spelled out on a nineteenth-century version of PowerPoint slides. These visuals also make the story more comprehensible for viewers not familiar with the poem. The image of the story starting inside Carroll's head, which then becomes the island, is just one of many inventive visual gags; others include Magritte's pipe and tuning forks.

Simon DaVison



Mark Richards



The characters, their costumes, and the scenes are another delight for lovers of the poem, as they are modeled on the original Henry Holiday art. Nine of Holiday's illustrations are copied exactly from the book.

The actors were very well chosen. In particular, Ramon Tikaram, who played the Baker and voiced every character in the film (!), is very convincing and charismatic, a cross between Captain Jack Sparrow and Injun Joe from *Huckleberry Finn*. A female character is added, in the terpsichorean persona of Hope, portrayed as a beautiful maenad.

The invention of backstories for the characters works very well, adding emotional involvement, especially for the characters of the Boots and the Baker, whose origins are fleshed out. The Baker's arc is a quintessential Hero's Journey, going from biblical creationism and original sin to enlightenment and freedom of thought. The Baker is Wagner's Dutchman, fleeing eternal damnation, and succeeding in the end.

Darwin appears, as do antediluvian fossils, which introduce themes of ecology, cosmology, and the destruction of Eden, à la *Avatar*. Socratic questioning is shown as the only way of attaining knowledge, and rejection of dogmas is absolute. This wickedly clever film leaves us with two burning questions: What is the unsolved conundrum? And what is hidden in the lagoon?

The after-screening exchange between Mark Richards and Simon was quite informative and entertain-

ing. Simon graduated with a history degree but went off to London to be in a rock band, which didn't pan out. Then he had the idea of writing for TV, which was much more satisfying. At first it was documentaries, but he soon branched out into advertising and drama, eventually doing feature films. He ultimately turned to directing. "Most of *The Snark* was filmed within a mile of where I live" (Wiltshire). The film is available on Amazon Prime Video.⁸

Our new president, Arnold Hirshon, was the first speaker in the second session, "Alice Strikes Back." In a very brief prolegomenon to his presentation, Arnold first outlined the Society's initiatives and priorities—including increasing the membership and requesting members to volunteer on the newly created committees. He then referred to the revised bylaws and invited everyone to the in-person-only Fall 2023 meeting at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, September 30 to October 1 (see p. 38).

Arnold titled his well-illustrated presentation "Alice in Motion: A History of Alice on Film." He was prepared to review some 115 movie and television dramatizations and adaptations of the *Alice* books from nineteen countries, but he admitted the exposition had to be cut due to time constraints. His critical approach was "not to compare the films to the books, not to judge them by our contemporary standards, and not to let the Tenniel legacy prejudice our reception" of the film version. The intermingling of characters from both books was, he pointed out, almost always held together by the figure of Alice—with greater or lesser success.

He began with the 1903 Cecil Hepworth and Percy Snow film. At 12 minutes, it was the longest film of its time; Arnold showed the royal procession scene. Next came the 1910 Edison movie directed by Edwin S. Porter, from which we saw Alice in the Pool of Tears. The 1915 W. W. Young film starring Viola Savoy followed, with its wide range of costumes—some of which, like the White Rabbit's, were genuinely creepy. A 1923 animated short, *Alice's Wonderland*, representing Walt Disney's first foray into Wonderland and featuring Virginia Davis, had little to do with Carroll's creations. The 1931 Bud Pollard movie was filmed in New Jersey before Hollywood became Hollywood. It was the first "talking picture," and remained fairly close to the book's original dialogue.⁹ The 1933 Norman Z. McLeod Paramount production opened with a panoply of Hollywood stars, who wore such heavy makeup that they could not be recognized. This film, like many others, was a financial flop; Arnold showed the Walrus and the Carpenter scene. Skipping ahead, he noted the fascinating 1949 stop-motion film made in France by Lou Bunin, a full showing of which was to follow later in our program.

The 1951 Disney film was also featured, but it is so well known he said it required no further discussion. Arnold discussed cartoon versions of *Alice*, a number of



Arnold Hirshon's bookplate

made-for-television U.S. and U.K. productions, a 1976 pornographic film, ballet and opera versions, and a 1981 musical, *Alice at the Palace*, which starred a young Meryl Streep. Among the foreign films that Arnold covered were the 1976 Argentinian low-budget film by Eduardo Plá, in which he noted some sexual overtones, and the 1988 Jan Svankmajer film. After showing clips from many other films and programs, he concluded with the 2009 sci-fi Nick Willing *Alice* TV miniseries and listed four productions produced in the last three years. He left the audience with this trivia question: Besides Kate Beckinsale, which actresses who played Alice in the movies went on to major acting careers? Guesses can be submitted to him at president@lewiscarroll.org.

Andy Malcolm, together with Wendy Rowland (director) and his wife, Robin Bain (cinematographer), have been working on *There's Something About Alice*, a documentary that explores the myriad ways in which artists, illustrators, filmmakers, collectors, enthusiasts, and others have been inspired by the *Alice* books, for over a decade. He has shown us the "work in progress" at our Fall 2013, 2014, and 2015 meetings and the finished film at the 2022 Fall Conference in Gainesville, to great acclaim. The hour-long film can be seen online,¹⁰ but can't be officially released until all permissions have been received. For this meeting, the trio gave us a fascinating half-hour presentation about how the film came about and revealed some of the joys and some of the challenges they experienced while planning and making the documentary.

Any moviegoer will be aware that a scene in a film that lasts just a few seconds sometimes takes several hours to record. But it was enlightening to hear the behind-the-scenes details and see film clips that never made it into the final documentary. Andy and his team presented several examples and showed some of the outtakes. For example, what should have been a simple scene filmed in the Christ Church Deanery garden required numerous attempts to open the famous little green door that leads to the Cathedral garden. It looks charming in the finished documentary, but it was certainly a challenge getting it to look so good.

L to R: Andy Malcolm, Robin Bain,
Wendy Rowland



Perhaps the most uplifting part of their presentation was the outtakes of their interview with Ralph Steadman. Ralph, always the entertainer, displayed a wonderful habit of drifting off the subject to tell anecdotes and share his wit and wisdom. Hard to edit, no doubt, but a joy to watch.

This was an entertaining session, during which we learned that there is a plan to edit and compile a collection of the best of the rest. There remain many hours of good interview material that simply could not be used in the documentary, but that needs to be preserved and made available for future scholars and enthusiasts. Please consider contributing to their campaign to help complete this important project of documenting the place of Carroll in popular culture.¹¹

Our next speaker, Rebecca Gibson, PhD, is an assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University in the Anthropology Unit of the School of World Studies. Her research interests are many and varied, as reflected in her authored or co-authored works,¹² and she is currently working on *Cyborgs, Ethics and The Matrix: Simulations of Sex and Gender and Our Quest for Authenticity*, to be published next year. As she put it:

From the second scene of the 1999 movie *The Matrix*, we are engulfed in a dual narrative: cyberpunk meets Alice's Victoriana. Neo is told to follow the white rabbit. When he does, he is catapulted straight into a twisting tunnel of

riddles, dreams, chases, leaps, and Alice allusions, demonstrating the movie's close connection with the Carrollian oeuvre. What ensues once he goes down the rabbit hole is one of the most iconic Hero's journeys in film history, a deep look into reality, self-knowledge, love, and interconnectedness, which only resolves once he accepts his eventual transformation and transcendence. Yet, like Alice, Neo takes more than one trip. The fourth movie, 2021's *The Matrix Resurrections*, deepens and broadens the world as he knows it. To believe the unbelievable, to do the impossible, to know oneself and to respect the differences of others, the characters of the Matrix franchise demonstrate the ways in which our familiar world skews when we view it from the outside.

The many cross-references between the *Alice* books and *The Matrix* have been discussed in these pages before (KL 107:60), but Rebecca added much depth.¹³ In the first movie, Morpheus gives Neo the Eat Me/Drink Me choice of a red or a blue pill; the blue represents everything he *thinks* is true (i.e., the Matrix simulation, hence also Alice's dreamlands), and the red stands for actual reality (the reddish-hued pod hive and Zion and, for us, the villainous Queen of Hearts and the garden of roses). Morpheus, perhaps paradoxically, calls *that* actual world "Wonderland," enforcing the metaphor that any cross-overs between realities are a Wonderland for the person experiencing them.

Canonically linked to David Mitchell's masterpiece *Cloud Atlas* (Mitchell co-wrote the screenplay of *Matrix Resurrections*), the fourth movie goes completely meta.¹⁴ Thomas Anderson (Neo) is told he is the world-renowned creator of three popular video games (i.e., the previous three *Matrix* movies), and it's all inside his head. To navigate these conflicting realities, he needs to take some leaps of faith, some literal. The underlying subtext in the film is liminality, the crossing of thresholds, transitions. In fact, both Wachowskis, the writer/directors, had transitioned from male to female in the years between the films.

Rebecca Gibson



April Lynn James



April Lynn James, PhD, has addressed the Society before and has also been a wonderful performer in our Maxine Schaefer Readings series. Her talk this time was titled “Thirteen Years Later: Why the Tim Burton *Alice in Wonderland* Is Still #1 with Me.” “Thirteen years” refers both to the time since she first experienced the film and to the time that has passed within the film since Alice first went to Wonderland as a child; this duality provides a key for understanding the film’s powerful impact on her.

Like many of us, April came to *Alice/Carroll* through a series of serendipitous circumstances. In 2010, at a personal and professional low point, April was taken to an early showing of the film by a friend with SAG passes, and this impromptu outing awoke a part of her that she didn’t know was dormant. In the thirteen years since, she has read everything she could lay hands on by and about Carroll; written and performed as Madison Hatta, Sonneteer; and fortunately for us, become heavily involved in our Society.

The thirteen years between the events of Carroll’s original *Alice* story and Alice’s return to Wonderland in the Burton film are also illuminating. This film, which was the top-grossing film in the nation its opening weekend, going on to garner costume and art direction Oscars, depicts not a child but a heroic young adult Alice, an Alice with relatable family problems, who nevertheless takes control and becomes the Beamish Boy and saves a world. April is far from alone in finding the vibrant production design and Mia Wasikowska’s warrior riveting and inspirational—a younger generation of Alice enthusiasts has embraced the look and themes of the movie as a message meant for them.

We have had a few other opportunities to capture in publications and at meetings the stories of how Alice and Carroll have come to be so meaningful and central in the lives of LCSNA members, and we are fortunate to be able to add April’s thoughts and her visual presentation to our archive.

We were then treated to a full screening of Lou Bunin’s *Alice au Pays des Merveilles* (1949), introduced by Jenna West in a talk called “Alice in Stop-Motion-



Jenna West

land: *The Alice We Forgot*.” Jenna is a self-proclaimed “Alice nerd,” with a special interest in how *Alice* has been adapted in film and television. Bedecked with a colorful “pilgrim’s wreath of flowers” on her brow, she spoke about the film and its production history.¹⁵

Louis “Lou” Bunin (1904–1994) was an American artist, puppeteer, and pioneer of stop-motion animation, which he took up because he didn’t like the way his puppets looked on screen (visible strings, etc.). He eventually patented a process using armatures with latex coating to manipulate facial expressions. The film takes a live-action Alice (twenty-year-old Carol Marsh) to a stop-motion-animated Wonderland.

A few years after the War, Bunin was approached by the French government to make an *Alice* film, fully funded, using abandoned Nazi film labs. He moved with his family to France. There were abundant delays, including Disney’s conspiring with Technicolor to not allow him to use that film stock, forcing him to use Ansco Color, a far inferior one (the Mouse didn’t want competition). Further delays involved problems with electricity, unfinished studios, currency (e.g., some of their suppliers had to be paid in potatoes!), and an eventual plethora of lawsuits with distributors and Disney. The movie was filmed twice, simultaneously, one in English, one in French, each with its own director!

The French version came out in 1948, the American in 1951, two days before the Disney—it was not released in England due to its “disrespectful” portrayal of Queen Victoria—but it has languished in obscurity since. Over time, this film has been excessively and often poorly edited and has never been properly transferred for its VHS and DVD releases. (Jenna screened for us an incomplete composite version she had assembled from three different sources, which can be seen on the “Curiouser Archive” YouTube channel.¹⁶) Fortunately for posterity, Thunderbean Animation is currently preparing a fully restored version as part of a Lou Bunin set.

Following a break and a “Virtual Cocktail ¾ Hour,” Dane Keil of the YouTube channel Danejurous Arts was the perfect host to rescue us eleventh-hour survivors from passing out from sheer eyeball fatigue. Arrestingly

Dane Kell



attired in a Schiaparelli pink Cheshire Cat worn as a boa, he led us on a whirlwind series of opinionated and often hilarious one-minute critiques of thirty *Alice* films. Yes, Dane had watched thirty films in thirty days, declaring “I did it so you didn’t have to.” They ranged from the antique (Hepworth, 1903), to the creative (Bunin, 1949), to the silly and dated (Hanna-Barbera, 1966), to the familiar (Disney, 1951), to the excellent (Jonathan Miller’s 1966 version and *Dreamchild*). Once again, one wondered why the 1933 *Alice* producers went to the trouble of hiring a handsome actor like Cary Grant only to shroud him in a Mock Turtle costume.

Dane then showed us the ill-advised storybook *White Rabbits Can’t Jump*, featuring O. J. Simpson, from the eponymous episode of the ’90s Disney television series *Adventures in Wonderland*. That episode was never broadcast—O.J. became a pariah shortly before the planned air date—and remains lost. (But why would Disney think a kids’ picture book would be less offensive?)

He introduced our screening of the full-length *Alice au Pays des Merveilles* (O.R.T.F., 1970) by showing us an episode of his YouTube series *August in Wonderland*, which he had made especially for this occasion.

Many Carrollians complain about how no one ever makes an *Alice* film that sticks to the text. Well, ladies and gentlemen, be careful what you wish for. *Alice au Pays des Merveilles*, although entirely in French, has great fidelity to Carroll’s work, especially the dialogue. It even commences with Carroll’s opening poem “All in the golden afternoon,” as well as a watercolor by William Henry Hunt for atmosphere, and both Carroll’s and Tenniel’s drawings for the titles. That doesn’t mean it is easy to watch.¹⁷

The film is a remarkable experiment with blue-screen. “Experiment,” in this case, translates to “Let’s not do that again.” The actors perform against a constantly changing background. If the set—which is actually an empty room—isn’t swirling with psychedelia or op art, it is static with pop art dialogue balloons. While I [*Cindy Watter is speaking*] watched it, wondering which would come first—migraine or corneal collapse—I thought

that this is the sort of optical entertainment that can cause a seizure and should have a medical warning attached. To call it brightly colored is an understatement. It makes neon look like Harris tweed.

Little Marie-Véronique Maurin, with her long blonde curtain bangs and truculent resting-curmudgeonette expression, is an excellent Alice. She conveys Alice’s assertive pluckiness perfectly and is a joy to watch during the Tea-Party scene, in which she refuses to take any nonsense from the Hare and Hatter.

The costuming tends toward the brilliant, even fluorescent. One striking scene has Alice walking between the King and Queen of Hearts, and her red dress is perfectly complemented by their outfits, which of course feature red. The colors are so intense they almost vibrate along with the background. One of the film’s strengths is the animal costuming, seen to great advantage in the trial scene, with Bill the Lizard, the Dormouse, and so forth. The costumes are quite elaborate, with heads that are rather like helmets.

Cautionary note: While the two royals discuss beheading, an enormous pair of scissors appears and snips off Alice’s head, which floats about before dropping back onto her shoulders. And while readers know that the Duchess and her Cook with the peppery disposition allude to domestic violence in the book, in this film they sing about running the baby through the meat grinder. This scene is illustrated with a Monty Python-esque drawing of a pig, but still . . .

At the end of the screening, Dane wailed theatricaly about how much he had suffered through it. I enjoyed it as a curious period piece, although I recommend sunglasses while viewing, and an ice pack on one’s forehead afterward.

Contributing to this report were Mark Burstein, August Imholtz, Yvonne Kacy, Ray Kiddy, Stephanie Lovett, Mark Richards, and Cindy Watter.

Endnotes

- ¹ The LCSNA online events committee.
- ² *Alice Is Everywhere*.
- ³ The “newsreel” was “her own invention.” The cartoon was Ian Rickett’s b&w *Jabberwocky*, his entry for the USC Wonderland Award in 2010.
- ⁴ The film won two “best short film” awards in Switzerland in 1990: La Canne d’Or (the golden cane) at the Festival du Film de Comédie de Vevey and La Prime à la Qualité at Les Journées Cinématographiques de Soleure (Solothurn). The former was particularly meaningful to her, as the festival involves the descendants of Charlie Chaplin, who lived in Corsier-sur-Vevey from 1953 to the end of his life in 1977. The film was also shown on Swiss television and at other festivals.
- ⁵ In talking about this upcoming meeting to Jenna West, Heather was told about a long-lost *Phantasmagoria* film that Jenna had read about in an old *Knight Letter*.

Through online detective work, she eventually tracked down the filmmaker, who contacted her alma mater, the London Film School, which initially declared it had been lost, but ultimately found a “cutting copy,” complete with tape splices, dirt, and grime, reposing in a dusty film canister. The cost to clean it up and digitize it was steep, so Heather organized a GoFundMe campaign, and generous LCSNA members and friends paid for the whole thing!

- ⁶ First published in *Phantasmagoria and Other Poems* (1869), later in *Rhyme? And Reason?* (1883).
- ⁷ www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XskEXzZ6wA.
- ⁸ www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B0BYSNCX64
- ⁹ LCSNA members had the opportunity to watch this movie, starring Ruth Gilbert, at our Fort Lee, New Jersey, Fall 2009 meeting [KL 83:5].
- ¹⁰ vimeo.com/724872964 (password: Alice).
- ¹¹ www.gofundme.com/f/aliceinterviews.
- ¹² *Desire in the Age of Robots and AI: An Investigation in Science Fiction and Fact* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), *The Corseted Skeleton: A Bioarchaeology of Binding* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), *Gender, Supernatural Beings,*

and the Liminality of Death: Monstrous Males/Fatal Females (Lexington Books, 2021), *Global Perspectives on the Liminality of the Supernatural: From Animus to Zombi* (Lexington Books, 2022).

- ¹³ A few other references from the first movie not mentioned in our prior article: In an early scene, a cat disappears and reappears in a moment of déjà vu. There’s a character named “Mouse.” Later, the Oracle has rabbits running around her apartment and asks Neo, “Who are you?” The movie playing in the background in that scene was *The Night of the Lepus* (1972), a horror flick involving giant rabbits.
- ¹⁴ The second and third movies of the franchise were popular and critical disasters (for one thing, it was intended to be one movie, but WB stretched it out to two) and had no Carrollian references.
- ¹⁵ Bunin himself spoke to our Society on this subject in a Spring 1986 meeting.
- ¹⁶ www.youtube.com/watch?v=kafS_Cy4CjE.
- ¹⁷ www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUEwyBMP6oo.

❁❁ QUIZ ❁❁

Wit Teaser is a syndicated puzzle.
This one, by Stuart Cleland, appeared on March 4, 2023.

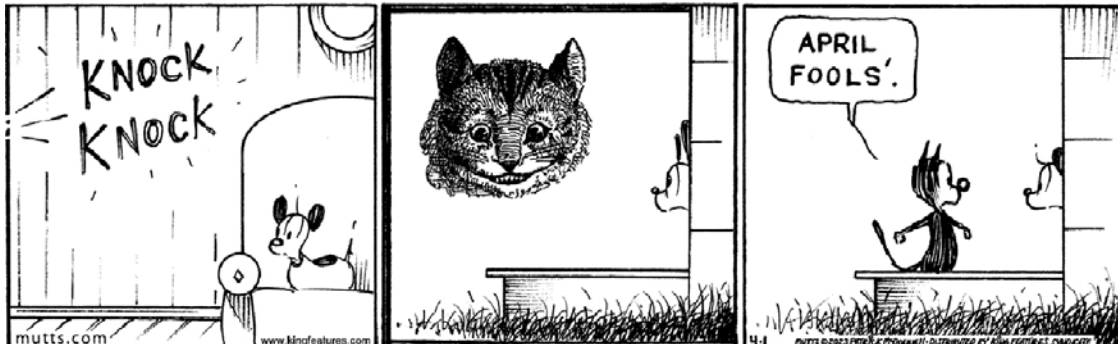
“Complete the verse with words that are anagrams of each other.
Each underline represents a letter.”

Alice wondered, “Are these creatures _____ to me —
Out to _____ and subvert my sanity?
Is it foolish (since I’m always changing size)
Trusting random _____, mad or otherwise?”

Answer on p. 12



Patrick O'Donnell, *Mutts*, April 1, 2023



LCSNA Virtual Events

MARK BURSTEIN & RAY KIDDY

Our Third Annual VirtuAlice “Carrollian Show and Tell” took place on Sunday, December 11, 2022. First up were the charming husband-and-wife/librettist-and-composer duo of Zane Corriher and Amy Scurria, who had taken advantage of the pandemic to write *Alice: An Operatic Wonderland* along with soprano Kelly Balmaceda, who participated in creating the storyline and adaptation. She also performed as Alice in a staged workshop, which took place at the Maguire Theatre in Elizabeth City, NC, in January 2022, with a cast of six principals, chorus, and piano accompaniment. Zane told us of some of the creative choices that were made (e.g., combining the Mouse and the White Rabbit) as we viewed scenes from that colorful production. Using elements of Campbell’s “Hero’s Journey,” they moved the story along, structured on Alice’s quest for identity. The opera was through-sung, with tunes a nineteenth-century opera lover such as Mr. Dodgson would have enjoyed. It will be formally premiered at the Red River Lyric Opera Summer Festival in Wichita Falls, Texas, this July, with a chamber orchestra. Follow its progress at www.amyscurria.com/alice. [*Since then, we have learned that it has been selected as a semi-finalist in the American Prize in Opera Competition and also that it will be performed with full orchestra, ballet, puppets, and an ensemble of over 40 singers at the University of Utah in the spring of 2024.*]

Our second speaker, Robert Watkins, is a math professor at Keiser University in Fort Lauderdale who for many years has given a six-week class called “The

Mad Hatter’s Tea Party” for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Florida State. Each class is an actual tea party, with scrumptious savories, sweets, baked goods, and, yes, tea. He gave us his witty “sales pitch” aimed at recruiting students (the class is usually filled within minutes), showing not only the delicious goodies proffered, but the topics covered, including “the Big Bang, genetic epistemology, a microscopic bestiary, non-Euclidean geometries, postmodernism,” and the like! He spends enormous amounts of time on food preparations and presentations for the parties (not to mention the topics), and we got to see his table settings and decorations—even the decoupaged boxes he carries them in.

Dieter de Lange is from Potchefstroom, South Africa, and traces his love of *Alice* back to the Disney cartoon and the 1994 *The Learning Channel: Great Books* TV episode on Carroll [*which will be the subject of—and shown in its entirety at—a VirtuAlice meeting later this year*]. He presented “A Few Carrollian Curiosities” of Afrikaans translations, showing some examples of clever wordplay therein (Dieter is a translator by profession), and then read “Jabberwocky” to us in Afrikaans (“Brabbelwoggel”). [*In the Chat, we learned that the first Afrikaans translation was done in 1934, according to Alice in a World of Wonderlands. Seventeen more were published before 2010, and four Looking-Glasses.*]

Michael Eckman then shared some of his vintage posters: a 1972 exhibition at Christ Church, prints and ads from the Pennyroyal *Alice*, and a sheet of paper dolls. In his charming presentation, he mentioned how the Pennyroyal

Zane Corriher



Amy Scurria





Robert Watkins

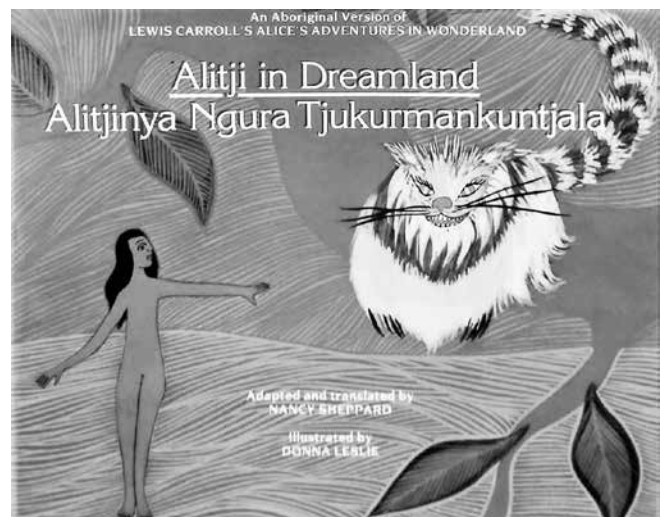
Jackie Lee's "Lewis Carroll's Logical Garden"



ads featuring the Tweedles were particularly meaningful to him as he is the proud father of two sets of twins!

Jackie Lee, who demoed his virtual-reality game "Lewis Carroll's Logical Garden," based on both *The Game of Logic* and *Under Ground*, at our first "Show and Tell" (KL 106:8), demonstrated to us how far it had progressed in the intervening years. In the game, now web-based, a "collaborative, interactive adventure," players solve logical problems and riddles, collect tokens, and travel as avatars through a maze with scenery and characters from the books. Join the fun at carroll.sciencevr.com.

Dean Howard showed us one of the treasures he found in an antique shop, *Alitjinya Ngura Tjukurmankuntjala* (*Alitji in the Dreamtime*), a translation into Pitjantjatjara, an Aboriginal language, by Nancy Sheppard, with color illustrations by Donna Leslie and a facing-page back-translation (Simon & Schuster Australia / Ten Speed Press, 1992). He shared some of its images, although discreetly refraining from showing any containing Alice herself, as she is unclothed. He commented on some of the compromises the trans-



lator had to make in order to make the story comprehensible to the Aboriginal culture, such as turning the White Rabbit into a White Kangaroo, showing leaves instead of playing cards, and using "Waltzing Matilda" instead of "Twinkle, Twinkle." [*The edition*



Jacqueline Bardner Smith's chess set

itself was a revision of Sheppard's Alitjinya Ngura TjukurtJarangka (University of Adelaide, 1975), which was illustrated by Byron Sewell.]

Gabriella Boentges, a software engineer known to social media as “Curiously Alice,” shared with us her Wonderland room, replete with a tea party, books, dolls, rugs, chairs, socks, paintings, and prints. She particularly enjoys carousel and accordion books, and said she fell into the Carrollian universe through American McGee’s videogame “Madness Returns.” Even her wastebasket looked like a white rabbit! Follow her adventures at curiouslyalice.com.

Mark Burstein is well known to us as a scholar and book collector, but today he decided to share one lesser-known aspect of his collection, original art (and the occasional print). He remarked that in this age of NFTs it might not be necessary to explain why a one-of-a-kind original fresh from the artist’s hand is so much more meaningful than a print, even a limited-edition one. His collection includes the original art of *Alice* illustrations from such artists as Anne Bachelier, Nicole Claveloux, Kim Deitch, David Delamare, Ángel Dominguez, Leila Dowling, Harry Furniss, Evert Geradts, Bill “Zippy” Griffith, Walt “Pogo” Kelly, Peter “Spy vs. Spy” Kuper, Oleg Lipchenko, Dan “Odd Bodkins” O’Neill, Willy Pogany, Byron Sewell, Mahendra Singh, Charles Ware, Wally Wood, and many others, as well as a few treasured signed limited-edition prints by Ralph Steadman, Iassen Ghiuselev, and others.

Jacqueline Bardner Smith is a children’s book writer and illustrator, as well as a concept artist and designer/sculptor of collectibles for The Franklin Mint, Hamilton, Lenox, and the like. One of her passion projects is a *Looking-Glass* chess set, twenty-two years in the making, coming in two flavors: black-and-white and color, each accompanied by a mirrored mahogany chessboard, all of which she showed to us. Each of the pieces is a

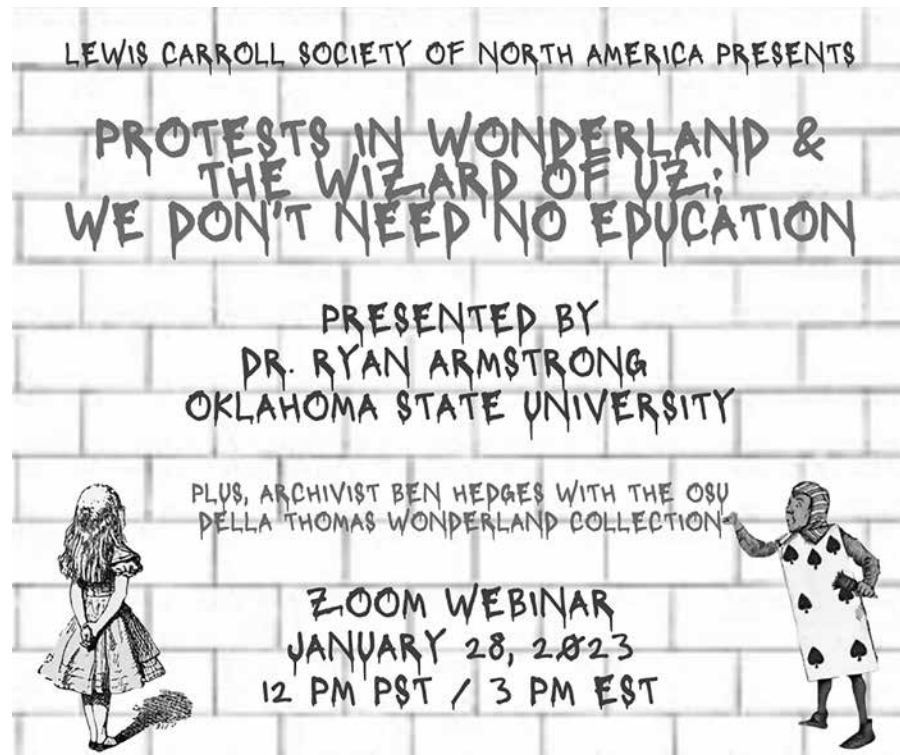


Gabriella Boentges in her Wonderland room

Carrollian character or personality (Carroll and Tenniel themselves serving as opposing knights in the color version). She sculpted the pieces in plaster and had resin molds made. Sadly, they never got into production, but her two artist’s proofs exist, and she is looking for an appropriate home for them. You can see the set at bit.ly/JBSCheeset.

Next, over two Saturdays (January 28 and February 4), we were treated to presentations by Dr. Ryan Armstrong of Oklahoma State University and Ben Hedges, an archivist with the Della Thomas Wonderland Collection at OSU.

Della Thomas held many jobs, but among them was heading the new OSU Library and teaching classes in Children’s Literature. After retiring, she and her son started Caravan Books in Stillwater, Oklahoma, selling new and used books. She worked with the American Library Association and made important contributions to the OSU Library as a whole, but also donated her personal collections to the library after she retired. The col-



lection seemed to emphasize twentieth-century books, ephemera, and artifacts such as dolls.

Ryan Armstrong is a visiting assistant professor of Religious Studies and has done graduate work at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and at Princeton, where he wrote his doctoral thesis on the Book of Job with insights as seen through the lens of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. As he is such a dynamic speaker, I suspect that some of his pastimes—such as break-dancing and performing rap music with a dance crew called the Dynamic Rockers—help inform his approach to the classroom. He even has a YouTube channel to share some of his enthusiasm for his subjects.

Many of the Carrollians present declared themselves to be not as au courant with the Book of Job and other books of the Bible as they should be, but some showed us their copies in the after-discussion. Not that we doubted them. Dr. Armstrong's presentation did not assume deep knowledge of the biblical texts and was very accessible. I did not know that there are "skeptical books" of the Bible, but the Book of Job is considered to be one because it involves some argument, some disputation, some "storms" and "hot air," and a resolution that does not really resolve things. As with *Wonderland*, Job makes mistakes in speaking, has to adjust his expectations to some bizarre events, and ultimately realizes that there are no easy answers. Both the Book of Job and *Wonderland* use neologisms or "nonce words," double entendre, and compound-word formation. There is also a breaking down of the so-called "fourth wall," as when Alice opines that the

Duchess would make more sense if her words were written down and when Job demands that the story of his experiences should be written down in a durable manner, to inform future readers. One is left being tempted to actually read Dr. Armstrong's dissertation.

Ben Hedges generously shared examples from the Wonderland Collection. The presentation on the first Saturday was light on books; he explained that as an archivist at the library, he saw what was most engaging to today's students, and that was not books; he did, however, present some very nice books on the second Saturday.

Both presenters spoke about and presented on *Wonderland* only. Neither presenter has experience with the Carrollian community outside of the works they showed and discussed, but we had fun in our discussions after the presentations, and we may see them in the future engage in the wider milieu—and we look forward to that day.

Lastly, on Sunday, March 5, we were treated to "Fluttering Across the Pages of Manga History" with Dr. Amanda Kennell. Dr. Kennell is currently an assistant teaching professor of International Studies at North Carolina State University. Her first book, *Alice in Japanese Wonderlands: Translation, Adaptation, Mediation*, will be published by the University of Hawai'i Press this July.

As we know, *Alice* has inspired countless artists and other creatives around the world for many years. Its popularity in Japanese comics—*manga*, a style of comic

Amanda Kennell



books and graphic novels aimed at adults as well as children—is particularly significant.

[Dr. Kennell's article on the history of Japanese manga (KL 107:19 ff), co-written with Shinichi Kinoshita, is a very informative summary of the field. Hence this writeup is somewhat abbreviated, as those interested in greater detail are referred to that article and her forthcoming book.]

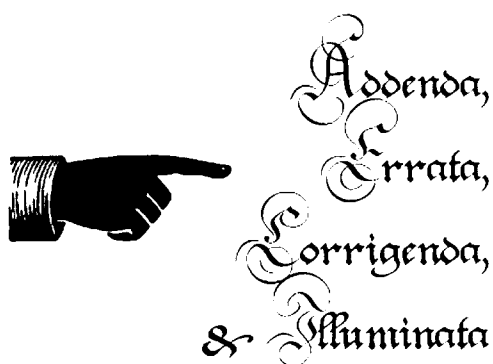
Dr. Kennell's talk delved into the history of the manga industry to reveal why Alice appears in so many manga, and why manga artists continue to adapt *Alice* repeatedly. Pivotal Alice manga by important artists, in key genres, and from crucial periods in Japanese media history were highlighted. Although Dr. Kennell uses the word "adaptations," she is referring to the freewheeling use of *Alice* characters or the general mise-en-scène, not literal retellings of the original story, although of course a few of these exist.

She began with a short history from 1868, the end of isolationism, through the beginnings of modern

manga—somewhere between the late nineteenth century and the 1930s, depending on whom one asks. Around 1910, as "girls' culture" and their education were beginning to emerge in Japan, its effects were eventually felt in manga. There was a huge boom in the field after the Second World War, but manga artists were able to make a decent living only decades later. Many "elite" manga artists—Igarashi, Otomo, Takemiya, Oshii, Yamato, Azuma, Koga, Okazaki, Iwai, CLAMP, Yuki, Watase, Mochizuki, Toboso—emerged, as Alice stories flooded the mystery, superhero, horror, fantasy, and "Lolita" genres.

One of the characteristics of manga is the "media mix" of spinoffs associated with a title. Although the series themselves are usually available as *tankōbon* (independent volumes) of thirty or more books, not to mention their possible dozens of sub-series, since around the 1980s they are also expected to appear in new media: anime videos, TV series, movies, *dōjinshi* (fan art), digital manga, and light novels. Hallmarks of their global boom in the '90s featured offshoots, "fan service" (freebies), and other "extras" collected into the paperbacks. Over the last thirty years, we have seen more "malleability" and detours, nonlinear stories, and admixtures with other series and sagas.

Let us all give a huge Carrollian shout-out to the wondrous Heather Simmons, Society vice president, chairwoman of the Senior Common Room Curators (the virtual events committee), and the charming host of all our VirtuAlice events!



In "The Funny Pages" of KL 107, we printed a cartoon of a clowder of cats relaxing in a bar presided over by a painting of our Cheshire-Puss. We stated that the source was unknown but that it was "probably from underground comix." We were right; it's from the story "Paradise Revisited" by Gilbert Shelton and Paul Mavrides published in *Fat Freddy's Comics & Stories* No. 1 (Rip Off Press, 1983), recently reprinted in *The Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers in the 21st Century and Other Follies* (Fantagraphics, 2023). In the story, Fat Freddy's Cat had miscounted his lives and actually died and gone to cat heaven, which is what was depicted. (He came back.) Also, we identified "Cicero's Cat" (from Mutt & Jeff), but forgot she had a name; she is yclept Desdemona.



threars / hatters

ANSWER

Humpty Dumpty in *Czarytorium*

DANUTA RADOMSKA-FILIPEK

A*lice in Wonderland*, a classic of children's literature, is not much in demand in Poland, compared to other countries. The first Polish translation was published relatively late, in 1910—the French and German came out in 1869—perhaps due to the complicated historical situation of Poland in the nineteenth century. Moreover, the situation during the post-War era was itself so absurd that there was little demand for nonsense literature. From 1955 until 1986, only three new translations appeared, while from 1986 until 2015, seven translators took up the challenge of translating Carroll's books. As befits an exceptional work, the history of its translations is also fantastic. The identity of "Adela S," *Alice's* first translator, remains an enigma, although there have been hypotheses about her.¹ Moreover, for years there was no confirmed information that any copy of the first Polish *Alice* translation had survived. Today we know that there are at least four.

It is said that "each generation should try to get its own translation of this multifaceted book—in new settings and with new sensitivity."² The question arises how readers received a new—the twelfth³—rendering, *Perypetie Alicji na Czarytorium* (Wasowsky, 2015, ISBN 978-83-3934972-1-8) as translated by Grzegorz Wasowski, a music journalist and satirist who works in radio and television. He also runs the Wasowsky Publishing House, where he carries on his father's legacy.

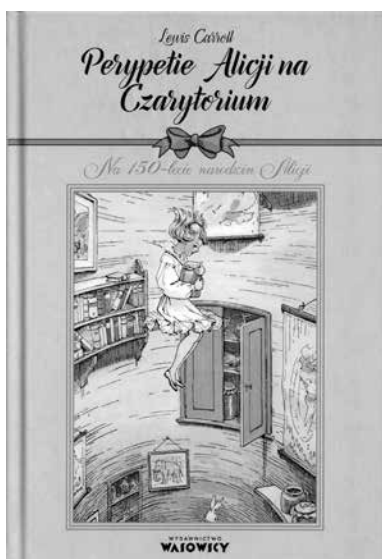
To understand the phenomenon of translating *Alice*, we need to mention Jerzy Wasowski, Grzegorz's father. Jerzy Wasowski and his friend Jeremi Przybora were the founders of the absolutely unique *Elderly Gentlemen's Cabaret*.⁴ In the years 1958 through 1966, the cabaret was presented on censored Polish television, and was a sensation. Przybora wrote great lyrics, full of exquisite humor, lyricism, and metaphors, and the music was composed by Wasowski.

In those hopeless times, the two gentlemen embodied a world that was gone forever. Dressed in black morning coats, formal striped trousers, light vests with a carnation in the buttonhole, a cane, and a top hat, they stood out from the everyday grayness. They invited leading Polish artists to their imaginary parlor, and together they created an amazing atmosphere. Their specific brand of humor was liked by people of all social classes. Against the backdrop of the prevailing propaganda, their program was distinguished by irony, allusions, and absurdist, sophisticated, and elegant humor. To this day, there are phrases from their songs in Polish popular culture.

Grzegorz Wasowski does not create music like his father, but growing up in an artistic environment, he experienced the influence of his father's sense of humor. He likes burlesque, abstract, absurd, and surreal humor, which is probably why he's such a great fan of *Alice* and is lucky to possess all fourteen Polish translations, including the rarest ones. However, he disliked the Polish translators' parodies of Carroll's poems, with the exception of those done by Antoni Marianowicz. In his opinion, the translated poems were unmusical, devoid of melody and rhythm. Wasowski also believed that his translation would be more suitable for contemporary readers.

Although not a professional translator, he studied all the Polish *Alice* versions and the original text before deciding to retranslate *Alice in Wonderland* himself. Wasowski appears to be a kind of Humpty Dumpty among the translators: He rules not only the word, but almost the entire Polish text of *Alice in Wonderland*. It must be admitted that his version definitely stands out from others, and it evokes extreme reactions among fans of *Alice* and literary critics and scholars.

The *Alice* books seem to be equally popular among children and scientists, especially linguists. Every new translation is widely discussed (or very occasionally,



not). Wasowski was the first who broke with the traditional title of the book and the chapter schemas. The Polish title *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* or sometimes *Przygody* (adventures of) *Alicji w Krainie Czarów* has become a canonical title in Polish literature. Over the years, the word “Wonderland”—*Kraina Czarów*—has settled into Polish culture. Unlike the previous translators, Wasowski titled his version *Perypetie Alicji na Czarytorium*. The author justified his decision in the following way: the word *perypetie*—peripeteia⁵—better reflects the nature of Alice’s actions. Not only does she experience adventures, but she also has to overcome some obstacles. The portmanteau word *Czarytorium* consists of the Polish words *czary* (wonders, magic) and *terytorium* (territory). According to Wasowski, the word “land” describes a vast open space, while a “rabbit hole” implies an enclosed area. It must be said that he warned readers by proclaiming it an “unfaithful translation.”

The book was published on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of *Alice in Wonderland*. This elegant edition includes 167 black-and-white and 71 color vintage illustrations by 21 different illustrators. In addition, there is an afterword with the author’s explanations about his work on the Polish text and his fascination with “Jabberwocky.” Wasowski also included an essay, “*Nonsens pelen sensu – ‘Jabberwocky’*” by Ewa Rajewska, and the poem as translated by twelve Polish translators. As a person who appreciates wordplay and puns, Wasowski was aware of how difficult it is to convey a thought in a different language. Therefore, the main purpose of his *Alice* translation was to convey the *idea* of Carroll’s text and avoid word-for-word translation. He declared that he was trying to render the so-called spirit of English and the multi-genre humor contained in the original version, with the help of the richness of the Polish language.

As a translator, Wasowski considered himself a craftsman rather than a co-author. Literary scholars reviewed the new translation to verify Wasowski’s claim.⁶ Carroll’s language in *Alice* is characterized by simplicity, concision, and homogeneity. As for the simplicity of the style, not only critics, but also the common reader who had read other *Alice* translations, would notice a significant difference. For example, in Chapter VII, “A Mad Tea-Party,” the verb “said” occurs nearly sixty times. In a translation recommended for adults, Maciej Słomczyński used only six Polish equivalents of the verb. Antoni Marianowicz, the most popular translator among children, used only thirteen Polish verbs. A similar number of Polish verbs was used by Magdalena Machay in her translation. (Her book is additionally provided with notes and footnotes so that it can be used in class.) Is G. K. Chesterton’s famous warning still valid? “Poor, poor, little Alice! . . . She has not only caught and made lessons; she has been forced to inflict lessons on others.”⁷

Unlike all the above-mentioned translators, Wasowski proceeded in his own way. In his version of Chapter VII, he used as many as *forty-one* Polish equivalents of the English word “said,” including those that have fallen out of everyday use or are considered to be pseudo-elegant. In his afterword, he admits that using only one equivalent of the verb seemed too boring to him. In addition, Wasowski replaced the standard Carroll words with his own inventions; he created a lot of portmanteau words. Sometimes they are funny; my favorite is *dżemarańcza* for “orange marmalade.”⁸ However, most of these portmanteau words can focus a child’s attention on a new word itself rather than on the plot of the story.

A superficial analysis shows that Wasowski’s text also does not meet the condition of brevity / concision. Sometimes he adds words that slightly change the meaning of Carroll’s sentences. Moreover, the extra activities of some characters may seem funny, but they distract the reader’s attention from Carroll’s main ideas. The title of the famous “A Mad Tea-Party” chapter in Polish translations usually reflects its English equivalent. Wasowski made participants of the party sneeze all the time, so his chapter title “*A bzik!*” (more or less, “Achoo!”) makes sense. However, this is not the case in Carroll’s text and makes the story too wordy and lengthy. Another problem is Alice’s language. She is a well-bred girl from an affluent family, so a reader can expect her to use language appropriate to her social class. In her case, mixing sentimental vocabulary with youth slang contradicts the principle of text coherence.

One more example of Humpty Dumpty’s rule can be found in the Mouse’s story. Wasowski created a totally new scene. Carroll’s Mouse introduced its story with the announcement “This is the driest thing I know” and continued with well-known history facts; English children were familiar with William the Conqueror and the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Most Polish translators used the same English historical example of “the driest thing.” There are two exceptions: Adela S. used similar characters and events known in Polish history.

In the second instance, Wasowski acted totally differently. He found Carroll’s version as dull as dishwater and proposed his own amusing version.⁹ He combined three real historical characters who lived over a timespan of four hundred years and a famous battle familiar to Polish schoolchildren. The Mouse in the Polish translation tells a story of Władysław Jagiełło, who was king of Poland from 1386 to 1434; sculptor Wit Stwosz (1447–1533); and historical scene painter Jan Matejko (1838–1893). In Wasowski’s translation, they are three friends who make Matejko’s dream come true. Matejko longs to paint a large painting of a battle. Stwosz helps to hire film extras. One of the largest battles in the history of medieval Europe starts, and Matejko keeps painting it. In fact, Matejko’s famous painting is presented in

school history books. It depicts the Battle of Grunwald and the victory of the allied Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and Grand Duchy of Lithuania over the Teutonic Order in 1410.

Besides mixing the times, Wasowski introduced a lot of puns into the Polish Mouse story, which are impossible to render in English. The beginning of the Mouse story is exemplary:

Silence all round please! 'William the Conqueror,
whose cause was favoured by the pope...'

The Polish version by Wasowski begins like this:

*Proszę wszystkich o spokój, jeśli łaska! A zatem
Jagiello ..."*

"Ty-Giello?" – zdumiała się Kaczka.

"Nie, ja-Mysz"

"To kto Giello?"

"Król!"

"Angorski?"

"Nie, polski. Król Jagiello Władysław. ..."

However, to give the meaning in English, it would be necessary to change the spelling of Polish King's name slightly. To render the joke/pun we have to change "Ja ..."-into "I ..."

I am asking everyone to be calm, if you please!

So I-giello..."

"You-giello?"

"No, I-Mouse!"

"Who's Giello?"

"King" (The Polish word *Król* has a double meaning: "king" and "a big rabbit.")

"The Angora?"

"No, Polish, Władysław Jagiello, the king ..."

Additionally, the Polish dialogue is longer because Wasowski made the Duck keep interrupting the Mouse with irritating remarks. At the end, all the animals rushed in together and tied its beak to prevent it from speaking.

Contrary to the humor of Carroll's version, Wasowski's scene is amusing due to his puns and the anachronistic impossibility of the scene (the three friends' lifespans did not overlap, and it is ridiculous to consider painting a battle as it happens).

A Polish reader may enjoy this scene, but it has nothing in common with Carroll's text. If the reader is familiar with other translations of *Alice*, he or she may have the impression that Wasowski placed too much emphasis on the potential of the Polish language, which does not quite correspond to the literary principles of translation. Unlike Carroll's world, which is dominated by the mystery of human linguistic functioning, Wasowski's world is dominated by comic elements. How-

ever, he *stipulated* that it was an unfaithful translation. After the previous eleven translations, which often provoked heated, lively discussions, Wasowski proposed a translation that would surprise the reader of previous *Alices*. Some fans see some imperfections, but think the translation is great; they are delighted with the constant play on words; they are sure that a similar phenomenon will not happen again soon.

Perhaps the very ending of *Perypetie Alicji na Czarytorium* symbolically distinguishes his translation from others. Wasowski added a sentence not found in Carroll's text that changes the final scene: The older sister imagines an adult Alice telling children about her adventures. From these dreams, Big Sister is awakened by the Cheshire Cat's voice saying, "It cannot be otherwise. We have to be near her," and she sees its grin.

Wasowski was one of the winners of the prestigious *Literatura na Świecie* (World Literature) award in 2015. The text of *Perypetie Alicji na Czarytorium* will probably be analyzed by scholars and other future translators. Whether this version will be read by children is unknown, but any *Alice* collector will find it essential.

Danuta Radomska-Filipek is a retired teacher living in Jastrzębie-Zdrój, Poland, who runs the excellent website and blog "Lavender Hat" (<https://lawendowykapeluszn.pl/>) about Alice, Carroll, and Polish editions. Her article "The Polish Translations of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass" appeared in The Carrollian Issue 11 (Spring, 2003).

Endnotes

- ¹ Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska, "Adela S. (Silberstein)?", *Teksty Drugie*, April 2019, pp.180–197.
- ² Prof. Tadeusz Sławek, "Lewis Carroll, *Alicja w Krainie Czarów*, w tłumaczeniu E. Tabakowskiej", *Experyment* (<https://experymentt.wordpress.com>), June 13, 2013.
- ³ *Przygody Alinki w krainie cudów* (Adela S.), 1910; *Ala w krainie czarów* (M. Morawska, A. Lange), 1927; *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* (A. Marianowicz), 1955; *Przygody Alicji w Krainie Czarów* (M. Słomczyński), 1972; *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* (R. Stiller), 1986; *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* (J. Kozak), 1997; *Przygody Alicji w Krainie Czarów* (M. Machay), 2010; *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* (K. Dworak), 2010; *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* (B. Kaniewska), 2010; *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* (E. Tabakowska), 2012; *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* (T. Misiak), 2013; and a new one has been added since: *Alicja w Krainie Czarów* (J. Drewnowski), 2020.
- ⁴ <https://edukacjafilmowa.pl/kabaret-starszych-panow-1958-1966>.
- ⁵ A sudden or unexpected reversal of circumstances or situation, especially in a literary work.
- ⁶ Beata Piecychna, University of Białystok, "On the Hermeneutic Ontology of Language in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and Its Latest Polish Retranslation," *Crossroads: A Journal of English Studies* 18 (March 2017).

- ⁷ G. K. Chesterton, “The 100th Birthday of Nonsense,” *The New York Times Magazine*, Jan. 24, 1932.
- ⁸ (Orange marmalade has a slightly bitter taste and is not popular in Poland. Orange trees do not grow here; we are a country of apples and strawberries.) For me, the neolo-

gism *dżemarańcza* (“jamorange”) from the words for jam (*dżem*) and orange (*pomarańcza*) has a sweet taste and the sunny heat of orange orchards, and at the same time a melody of jazz and Latin dances.

- ⁹ *Perypetie Alicji*, p. 163.

The Hunting of the WHAT?

DANUTA RADOMSKA-FILIPEK

You may seek it with thimbles — and seek it with care . . .

That is how my hunt for an extremely-difficult-to-find Polish dual edition of *The Snark* began. I also had forks and hope but not a rail-way-share. Probably my smile charmed it, as the book finally appeared on my desk and, luckily, the Snark was not a Boojum.

Specifically, this is a most unusual edition that boasts two different translations of the poem, each with a different illustrator: *Oblawantura przez Wążarlacza* is a translation by Grzegorz Wasowski illumined by a fresh set of wildly colorful drawings by Dominik Jasiński; *Łowybryki wokół Żreka* is a translation by Wojciech Mann and Grzegorz Wasowski with the original, albeit poorly reproduced, drawings by Henry Holiday. The ISBN is 978-8393497201, but good luck in finding a copy (*infra*).

HISTORY OF THE TRANSLATIONS

The poem itself is a culmination of an absurd sense of humor, typical of England, as evidenced by its late translation into other languages. It was not translated into French until half a century after its publication in English. Meanwhile, in Poland, the social and political situation was so ludicrous that people were not interested in reading absurd poems. So far, four translators have set out to create Polish versions.

In the mid-seventies, even if there was a translator who could handle the poem, the publishers turned out to be Boojums—they refused to publish it. At least that’s what happened to Robert Stiller. It was not until 1982 that Wydawnictwo Morskie published Stiller’s transla-

tion, under the title *Wyprawa na Żmirlacza*, although it had appeared earlier, in 1973, in a literary magazine, *Literatura na świecie* [*World Literature*] no. 5(25). In 1998, Stanisław Barańczak, the Polish poet and translator, included the poem (titled *Łowy na Snarka*) in the anthology 44 *Stories*. In 2004, Oficyna Naukowa published a bilingual version with footnotes and hysterically funny illustrations by Janusz Stanny (see p. 26)—also a very difficult book to find.

A DOUBLE TRANSLATION

Music journalists Wojciech Mann and Grzegorz Wasowski began translating *The Snark* (*Łowybryki wokół Żreka*) in the late ’70s, but unfortunately their work took so long that Robert Stiller beat them to it, and his translation was published in an edition of 200,000 copies. (This is a lot for the Polish reading market.) Several years passed before Wasowski decided to set up his own publishing house, Wydawnictwo Wasowsky, and issue a new version of *The Snark*. In 2012 the book was printed in a small edition with the title *Oblawantura przez Wążarlacza i Łowybryki wokół Żreka*.

WASOWSKI’S SECOND TRANSLATION

Forty years after the first translation, Grzegorz Wasowski “discussed things with himself”—as he humorously presents it in the Introduction—and decided on a new title, *Oblawantura przez Wążarlacza*. Wasowski created two portmanteaux for the title itself: *wąż* (snake) and *żarlacz* (shark) resulted in *wążarlacz*. He altered a simple English word, “hunting,” into a new Polish portmanteau, *oblawantura*: combining *oblawa* (round-up, as in a rodeo) and *awantura* (adventure, fuss).

CHARACTERS

Although *Wążartacz* is used in the title, Wasowski uses the name *Żrek* from the previous joint translation in the first line of *Fit the First*. He adds in a footnote that the Bellman used the common name *Żrek*; however, zoologists refer to this animal as *Wążartacz*. The name of the Bellman is more ambiguous. In the first translation, he was called *BossTon*, while in the latest version he is called *Bim-Boss*, *Boss*, or *BijDzwon* (“ring a bell” or *TollBell*). The use of as many as three terms for one person may be a bit confusing for the average reader.

Other characters were named *Butypuc*–Boots; *Beretnik*–Maker of Bonnets and Hoods; *Bezprawnik*–Barrister; *Broker*, *Bilardzista*–Billiard-marker; *Bankier*, *Bóbr*–Beaver; *Bulkopiek*–Baker; and *Bydlottuk*–Butcher. Some are similar to the English ones; some are word games, such as *Butypuc* (an inversion of *Pucybut*, bootblack); *Bulkopiek* (*bulka*, a roll + *piekarz*, baker) and *Bydlottuk* (*bydło*, bovine + *tluc*, to club) are portmanteaux.

POEM

Another difference concerned the rhymes; the Polish language has many more feminine rhymes than masculine ones. In addition, Wasowski did not consider it necessary to stick to the number of syllables. The governing principle was to convey the humorous meaning of the poem, not to faithfully imitate the English rhymes. According to him, some parts of the poem are funny in English, but not in Polish. Therefore, he gave up on having a faithful translation.

Carroll’s stanzas consist of four lines, while Wasowski created verses with sometimes four, sometimes six lines. Compare

“For, although common Snarks do no manner of harm,

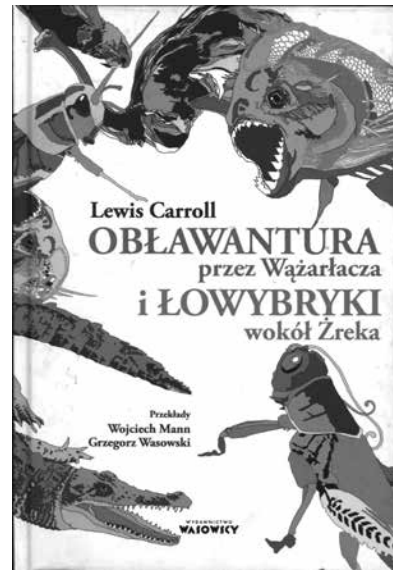
Yet I feel it my duty to say
Some are Boojums—” The Bellman broke off in alarm,

For the Baker had fainted away.

with its rendering as

*Choć nic złego od Żreka
Nie spotkało człowieka,
Muszę rzec, nie chcąc u was mieć krechy,
Ze Żrekami niekiedy
Są Buczydła, a wtedy . . .
Padł Bulkopiek zemdlony na dechy.*

Personally, I rather regret the loss of the Bellman’s famous saying, “What I tell you three time is true.” According to Edith Wharton’s autobiography *A Backward Glance* (D. Appleton-Century, 1934), Theodore Roosevelt used it, and I doubt he would understand Wasowski’s Polish equivalent, “*Prawdą jest, z czym się*



trzykroć wynurzę” (The truth is what I come up with three times). Instead of Carroll’s “tell,” Wasowski uses *wynurzyć się* (to surface).

ILLUSTRATIONS

Jasiński’s illustrations are the undoubted attraction of the publication. In my opinion, the vibrant pictures correspond to the content of the absurd expedition. I’m just an ordinary reader, not an art critic, so I was curious about how others perceive Jasiński’s vision. From some of the friends I surveyed, comments came back like “tiring,” “a bit aggressive,” “chaos reigns,” “characters are grotesque,” and “the characters come from nightmares.” Others were of the opposite opinion: “colorful and so cheerful,” “they arouse sympathy,” “pastel colors give a lot of light,” “the characters are funny,” “stimulates the imagination,” “the illustrations refer to traditional Japanese graphics and art nouveau,” “each is a beautiful painting,” and “a fervor of color and surprising compositions.”

HUNTING FOR THE SNARK

I asked Veronica, my daughter, to scout around for a copy, and she rather miraculously found one in an antique shop in Cracow. Contrariwise, my Instagram friend Semper Lux took over a year to find her copy, and she finally succeeded only because she continually badgered the illustrator, who now dwells in Portugal, a “gentleman farmer” living in a village so small that postal and other couriers come once a week, if that. He originally said he had none, but he eventually went home to Poland for a visit and found three in a dusty corner of his studio, which he signed and sent to her. Apparently only four copies of this rare beast, a veritable okapi, have been identified: one in the Burstein Collection, one in my possession, one shines its beatific light upon Semper Lux, and one has found its way to the Antipathies (Australia).

A sample of Jasiński’s art is shown on p. 59.

I'm Not Married to This, BUT . . .¹

ROBERT WATKINS

PART I OF II

Carroll wrote to entertain, and to make people think. Likewise, those have been my motives. I expect some readers will find my analysis convincing, others will not. Regardless of how many adherents a theory draws, or even if it is exactly what Carroll intended, it cannot end the hunt; we have merely marked one more spot on that splendiferous map where we found treasure. It will be no surprise when we continue to unearth hidden meanings in *The Hunting of the Snark*. Carroll's work is neither sensical, nor non-sensical; it is hypo-sensical. As in all his "children's stories," he has deliberately overlaid and conflated things, even using his nyctograph to mine his dreams and harness the associative powers of his subconscious. Words can mean more than we intend.

Indeed, Locke, in his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* says,

Σημειωτική (semeiotike), or the doctrine of signs; the most usual whereof being words, it is aptly enough termed also Λογική (logike), logic: the business whereof is to consider the nature of signs, the mind makes use of for the understanding of things or conveying its knowledge to others.²

In this remark, Locke identifies two purposes for signs: the understanding of things (logical), and the conveying of knowledge (cultural). How much of what I have written was Carroll's intent, how much my interpretation? Carroll was the consummate puzzle maker, imbuing his stories with cryptic subtexts, multilingual poly-entendre, surrealism, hypertextual meanings, and tortured logic, and he has left it to the readers to figure out what's what, and what to make of it. He gave hints, but not answers! As Proverbs 25:2 says, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is to search out a matter."

The Hunting of the Snark: An Agony in Eight Fits is a tragicomic masterpiece of nonsense poetry, far more comic than tragic—or so it might seem. It tells of the adventures of an odd assortment of men (and a beaver) as they hunt an indescribably frightening creature—or

so it might seem. Carroll dissembled whenever questioned about the Snark; he was adamant that it could not be depicted, and now we can never know what it looks like—or so it might seem.

On a first reading, one wonders many things: What has lured all these B-men to seek their fate in this far-off land of strange and dangerous creatures? Why do their names all begin with "B"? Why is one of them a Beaver? What *is* a Boojum (or a Snark for that matter)? And finally, and most provokingly, how, why, and what does it mean that if your Snark is a Boojum you will softly and suddenly vanish away? Everything in this story is lunacy, and anything that isn't lunacy is existential angst. And yet, all that is left unclear by the poem is dwarfed by the certainty that it all means . . . something.

Something, yes! But what?

And so, we read it again, this time knowing we are lost in a dark wood. And now (and in all subsequent readings), we will find ourselves among the crew on the hunt looking for clues. And as we hunt, we find more and more and more things to wonder about.

In Fit the 1st: *The Landing*, we learn of the Rule of Three (i.e., "what I tell you three times is true"), and we are introduced to our ten adventurers:³ (1) a Bellman, (2) a Boots, (3) a Maker-of-Bonnets-and-Hoods, (4) a Barrister, (5) a Broker, (6) a Billiards-marker, (7) a Banker, (8) a Beaver, (9) our hero (if there be one), a man who forgot his name, hereafter referred to as the Baker (or Hi, or Ho, or Candle-ends, or Toasted-cheese, etc.), and finally (10) a Butcher, who confesses he only kills beavers.

In Fit the 2nd: *The Bellman's Speech*, we see the treasure map. Inspect it closely! Seekers have come this way before us, and many have made much ado of what this map signifies. We also note other, similarly (un?)enlightening clues about the creature we are looking for. For instance, the Bellman tells us "the five unmistakable marks by which you may know, wheresoever you go, the warrant-ed genuine Snarks":

1. its "taste which is meagre and hollow, but crisp . . . with a flavour of Will-o'-the-wisp."

2. *"its habit of getting up late . . . breakfasts at five-o'clock tea, and dines on the following day."*
3. *"its slowness in taking a jest . . . It will sigh like a thing that is deeply distressed: and it always looks grave at a pun."*
4. *"its fondness for bathing-machines, which it constantly carries about, and believes that they add to the beauty of scenes—a sentiment open to doubt."*
5. *"ambition."*

I've just had an epiphany!!

That's a *woman*, no? Yes! Surely! (Ok, possibly.) It is at the very least an excellent tongue-in-cheek, battle-of-the-sexes caricature of a nineteenth-century woman!⁴ Could it be that all these unaccompanied B-men (Bachelors?) are looking for women? Maybe a wife (or a Bride)? Did I forget to mention *"the Baker could only bake Bridecake—for which . . . no materials were to be had"!!* And all it takes to make any cake a Bridecake? A Bride!

The latter four "unmistakable marks" are too cleverly sus, if the Snark is not a woman (please read them again if you must). The first "unmistakable mark" seems slightly amiss, but individual reports of *taste* would surely vary depending on the part of the Snark being tasted (much as in the descriptions of an elephant by the six fabled blind men). *De gustibus non est disputandum*. On the other hand, the *flavor* is spot on: "in literature, will-o'-the-wisp metaphorically refers to a hope or goal that leads one on, but is impossible to reach, or something one finds strange or sinister."⁵

The Bellman continues discussing Snarks saying,

*. . . It next will be right,
to describe each particular batch:
distinguishing those that have feathers, and bite,
from those that have whiskers, and scratch.*

Birds and *cats* are both slang terms for women, no? The association of women with birds is attested to as far back as the thirteenth century.⁶ The association of women with cats traces back to at least 3,000 BCE.⁷ Our language perpetuates such sexist stereotypes, referring disparagingly to women as "catty" and *femme-sur-femme* violence as "catfights."⁸

In Fit the 3rd: *The Baker's Tale*, we hear something of the Baker's family, hear of his uncle's advice on Snarks, and learn of the instantaneous and utter horror that will follow an encounter with a Boojum.

*"My father and mother were honest, though poor—"
"Skip all that!" cried the Bellman in haste.
"If it once becomes dark, there's no chance of a Snark—
We have hardly a minute to waste!"*

No chance of a Snark after dark? Is that because respectable Victorian women did not go out after dark without proper escort? Perhaps. In either case, no respectable woman would have ventured forth after dark at all, if she had any choice in the matter.⁹ In 1887, several letters appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* debating the "question of ladies walking without an escort in the London streets." During this debate, one male writer asked: "Is it possible to prevent men from following women and staring at them? Yes, by locking them up." And by "them," the writer meant the women.¹⁰

*A dear uncle of mine (after whom I was named)
Remarked, when I bade him farewell—"
"Oh, skip your dear uncle!" the Bellman exclaimed,
As he angrily tingled his bell.*



Mahendra Singh's Baker (Melville House, 2010)

From *The Baker's Tale* thus far, we may glean that the Baker is possibly an alter ego of Charles Dodgson, who would have been 42 years old in 1874 when he began writing *The Snark*. The Baker's skipping 40 years puts him around that age. As Martin Gardner put it, "Carroll's uncle was Robert Wilfred Skeffington Lutwidge, and Charles Dodgson's middle name was Lutwidge!" The Baker "had 42 boxes, all carefully packed," and many other instances of the number 42 in Carroll's writings are well known. Thus, Dodgson and the Baker are roughly the same age, both are in some sense named after a favorite uncle, and they share a 42-thing.¹¹

*"He remarked to me then," said that mildest
of men,
"If your Snark be a Snark, that is right:
Fetch it home by all means—you may serve it
with greens,
And it's handy for striking a light."*

For those of you who have thought the Snark a beast, “serve it with greens” probably meant, “put greens on the plate next to your roasted Snark.” I suspect that is exactly the interpretation Carroll was hoping you would make. But if my theory is correct, “serve it with greens” means “feed it salads” (to keep her figure trim). For me, “striking a light” conjures images of Colette’s *Gigi* being trained by her Aunt Alicia to choose, trim, and light a cigar.

The Baker’s uncle continues, and forthwith provides the first statement of the poem’s principal refrain, which will be repeated five more times, once in each of the remaining Fits.

*“You may seek it with thimbles—and seek it
with care;
You may hunt it with forks and hope;
You may threaten its life with a railway-share;
You may charm it with smiles and soap—”*

The idea of hunting something with thimbles or threatening its life with a railway-share is so preposterous, it’s utter nonsense—unless it’s a Victorian woman! Taking it as such, the idea of:

- ◆ charming it with smiles and soap is clearly sound advice;
- ◆ taking care (i.e., providing for its health, welfare, and protection) is of paramount importance in attracting your prey;
- ◆ showing hope (i.e., the expectation and desire for, ah, certain things to happen) should flush the game;
- ◆ forks could be a literary allusion to a romantic dinner which provides a perfect venue to showcase all the above qualities;
- ◆ and, if none of these courtly approaches work, you can threaten its life with a railway-share!! This speaks directly to your Snark’s ambition! Between 1840 and 1870, England was gripped by three waves of railway mania; no investment was hotter.
- ◆ and finally, to formally bag this beast, it is customary to present it with an engagement ring—or perhaps, a thimble?

I see no need to argue for the appropriateness of *care*, *hope*, *charm*, *soap*, or *smiles* when pursuing a woman. I will, however, elaborate on forks, railway shares, and thimbles.

I suspect the **fork** may be an allusion to a dinner date. Charles took dining with the ladies to a whole new level of fandom. According to Beatrice Hatch,

Never was there a more delightful host for a ‘dinner-party,’ or one who took such pains for your entertainment, fresh and interesting to the last.”¹² Escorted into “the large familiar room, with its huge windows overlooking St. Adlate’s . . . [you are] seated in a corner of the red sofa in front of the large fireplace, . . . when dinner is announced you are led into another room much smaller than the first, and you may be quite sure you will never get the same menu that you had the last time; for . . . Mr. Dodgson keeps a list of the dishes supplied every time he has guests at his table, and is careful always to look this up when he invites you, that you may never have the same thing twice. . . . After dinner . . . there are games of his own invention. . . . And so the evening slips away, and it is time to be escorted home again.”¹³

As for **railway shares**, recall that Dodgson was heavily vested in the enterprise. Young Charles had “improvised a make-believe ‘railway’ in the rectory garden, with the aid of a wheelbarrow, a barrel, and two or three small trucks. There were ‘stations,’ ‘booking offices,’ ‘refreshment rooms,’ and an elaborate code of regulations, in which the pompous tone of officialdom was duly caught and mocked.”¹⁴ This was later immortalized in his opera for marionette theatre, *La Guida di Bragia*, a spoof of the title of the real-world *Bradshaw’s Railway Guide*.

And finally, a bejeweled gold ring is the clear preference of most Snarks—but an engagement **thimble** is an option. Thimbles have long been used in that manner. “As a token of his love, a man might give to his beloved gifts or ‘trifles’ such as a thimble. . . . Gift-giving in courtship had a dual purpose: it would signify the man’s honourable intentions towards his sweetheart, while her acceptance of the gift would in turn signal her participation in the courtship. . . . The reason behind the thimble’s choice as a courtship gift: it was recognized by both men and women as a potent symbol of the domestic life which every woman was to assume after marriage, and in the giving of the gift it would have carried both the



*19th–c. engagement
thimble*

man's expectations of his future wife and the woman's agreement with these expectations. It is unlikely that a thimble as delicate and expensive as this one was given to be used: its power lay in its symbolic meaning."¹⁵ We can also note that "The Puritans . . . would exchange a thimble—a practical item a young woman could use as she sewed linens and clothing for her dowry. After the wedding, the thimble's cup was often cut off (symbolizing that her dowry was complete), and the rim could be worn as a ring."¹⁶

In Chapter 3 of *Peter Pan*, we can dismiss as intentionally arbitrary the identification of the thimble with a kiss from Wendy to Peter—but it would be a shame to completely overlook it. In any case, we cannot overlook the role that a thimble plays in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Among the 42 illustrations presented there, we find one that has been amply and admirably explicated by Howard Chang as a "wedding scene" at the end of the caucus race in Chapter III ("Seek It with a Thimble," *KL* 92:15), where the presentation of a thimble is taken as symbolic of their marriage.

Then Dodgson has a nocturnal admission:

*"I engage with the Snark—every night after dark—
In a dreamy delirious fight:
I serve it with greens in those shadowy scenes,
And I use it for striking a light:*

*But if ever I meet with a Boojum, that day,
In a moment (of this I am sure),
I shall softly and suddenly vanish away—
And the notion I cannot endure!"*

What could the nature of this vanishing be?

From the beginning of my Snark-hunting days, I thought these B-men could be out looking for a wife, because, well, "This is a man's world, but it means nothing without a woman or a girl!" And based on my own experience, it made sense that when a man finds a woman, suddenly and without saying another word to his friends, he drops out of society, at least for a while. That comports with the "vanishing." But it does not explain the accompanying unendurable dread.

It now occurs to me that The Baker's Tale began by skipping over the details surrounding the fact that "My father and mother were honest, though poor—" Carroll's father (another Charles Dodgson) was also a truly gifted student at Christ Church. In 1821, he graduated with a double first in mathematics and classics and was elected to a Studentship. Then, in 1827, he married Fanny Lutwidge and he softly and suddenly vanished from Christ Church—remaining unmarried was a condition of being a Student.¹⁷

In 1874, when Carroll began writing *The Snark*, he had been living at Oxford for more than half his life. His "house" in Tom Quad consisted of ten rooms on two

floors (and a studio above on the roof). It was extravagant, "perhaps the largest College set in Oxford,"¹⁸ and it included two magical towers with turret rooms, and more.¹⁹ His colleagues were important religious leaders, philosophers, scientists, writers, and artists; they and their families constituted most of his friends and acquaintances, and they all lived nestled between the Isis and the Cherwell, adjacent the Christ Church Meadow, at one of the two foci of English Academia. Perhaps, Carroll's softly and suddenly vanishing away from Christ Church—house, castle, and environs—and his successful and rewarding life as an Oxford don, which he had worked very hard to create for himself, was the notion he could not endure!

In Fit the 4th: *The Hunting*, the Bellman scolds the Baker for concealing his dread of the Boojum, the Baker defends his forthrightness, and the expedition readies for the hunt.

*"I said it in Hebrew—I said it in Dutch—
I said it in German and Greek:
But I wholly forgot (and it vexes me much)
That English is what you speak!"*

And it vexes me much that English is all I speak. That notwithstanding, I am aware of a chain of links in Hebrew, Dutch, German, and Greek relating to *snark*, although I rather doubt they are the same links Carroll had in mind.

Low **German** *snarken* (to snort or to snore) is the source of the English word *snark*, although it was not in common use in Carroll's time (unlike today!). From the *Online Etymology Dictionary*: "*snarky* (adj.) "irritable, short-tempered," 1906, from *snark* (v.) "to find fault with, nag" (1882), literally "to snort" (1866), from an imitative source."

Kate Lyon posits in "The Incorruptible Crown" (*KL* 71:15) that SNARK reversed is KRANS, which means *crown* in Afrikaans, a form of **Dutch**. Her argument relies heavily on 1 Corinthians 9:24–25 (originally written in **Greek**). She notes that Carroll's diary shows he had a life-long connection to 1 Cor 9:26. She highlights what these passages could have meant to him at the time he was writing *The Snark*.²⁰

Know ye not that those who run in a race indeed all run, but one receives the prize? So run, that ye may obtain it. And every man that strives for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we, an incorruptible one."

– 1 Cor 9:24–25 (KJV)

While Lyon's article did not focus on marriage, it triggered me to recall a proverb that resonated with my thoughts: "A good wife is like a crown." There is more

than one such allusion in the Bible. I found mine in Proverbs 12:4 (originally written in **Hebrew**), which to me provides a marvelously fitting saying: “A worthy woman is the crown of her husband, but a disgraceful wife is as rottenness in his bones.”

The Bellman coaches the hunters as they prepare to sally forth.

*The Snark is at hand, let me tell you again!
'Tis your glorious duty to seek it!*

*For the Snark's a peculiar creature, that won't
Be caught in a commonplace way.
Do all that you know, and try all that you don't:
Not a chance must be wasted to-day!”*

“Damme, sir, it is your duty to marry,”²¹ and it seems some things haven't changed; modern Snarks don't want to be caught in a commonplace way, either. The Banker arms himself with money, the Baker grooms himself . . .

*But the Beaver went on making lace, and displayed
No interest in the concern:*

(The Beaver is not interested in finding a wife?)

*Though the Barrister tried to appeal to its pride,
And vainly proceeded to cite
A number of cases, in which making laces
Had been proved an infringement of right.*

(The Barrister citing an infringement of rights is a case to be heard later in Fit the 6th.)

So, with the exception of the Beaver, who is not interested, the Snark hunters are all preparing for the hunt, and then

*The Butcher turned nervous, and dressed
himself fine,
With yellow kid gloves and a ruff—
Said he felt it exactly like going to dine,
Which the Bellman declared was all “stuff.”*

OK, it's not just me—the Butcher just decked himself out as a queen, and the Bellman took note—nodding sagaciously. Likewise, the Beaver and Baker have also taken note.

*The Beaver went simply galumphing about,
At seeing the Butcher so shy:
And even the Baker, though stupid and stout,
Made an effort to wink with one eye.*

Galumphing means galloping triumphantly! Recall from Fit the 1st that the Butcher was a beaver-killer (to the Bellman's chagrin), not a Snark-killer (i.e., not a lady-killer). The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides ex-



*Henry Holiday's Butcher
& Beaver (Macmillan, 1876)*

amples of “lady-killer” used in its modern sense dating back to 1811.

The origins of expletives and off-color slang, especially during the Victorian Era, are difficult to pin down; such terms are generally in use long before they reach print. Two such terms of interest are *butch* and *beaver*. *Butch* (etymologically derived from *butcher*) is a “Polari” term for a “show” of masculinity, and *beaver* was slang for a bearded man.²² (Later and modern slang meanings do not need to be discussed here.)

*“Be a man!” said the Bellman in wrath, as he heard
The Butcher beginning to sob.
“Should we meet with a Jubjub, that desperate bird,
We shall need all our strength for the job!”*

Note the Bellman's wrathful exhortation to “Be a man!”

In Fit the 5th : *The Beaver's Lesson*, we learn

*The Butcher contrived an ingenious plan
For making a separate sally;
And had fixed on a spot unfrequented by man,
A dismal and desolate valley.*

The noun *sally* comes from the French *saillir*, “to jut out” or “thrust.” If this dismal and desolate valley that the Butcher intends to thrust into is unfrequented by man, we can be sure it does not lead to the lush and fertile Delta of Venus.

*But the very same plan to the Beaver occurred:
It had chosen the very same place:*

*Yet neither betrayed, by a sign or a word,
The disgust that appeared in his face.*

*Each thought he was thinking of nothing
but "Snark"*

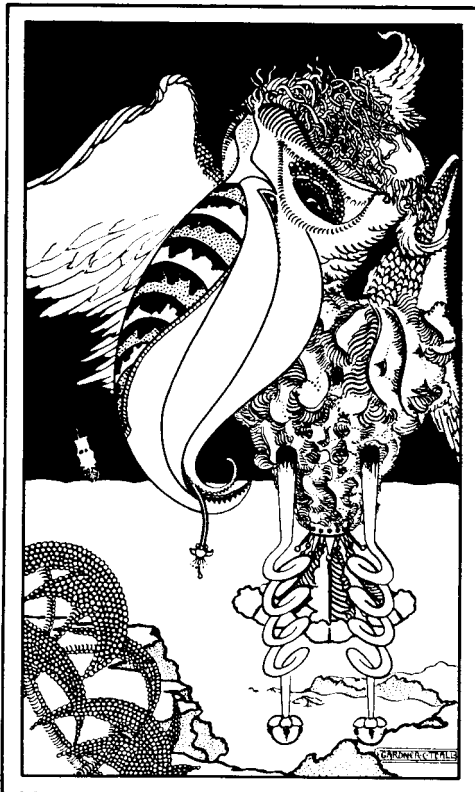
*And the glorious work of the day;
And each tried to pretend that he did not remark
That the other was going that way.*

The Beaver and the Butcher have the same plan! It seems to me, both are *feigning* hunting a Snark, perhaps hoping for a gay encounter but afraid to speak about it openly. If so, neither betrays, by a sign or a word, the (false) disgust that appears on his face. The mask of heterosexuality they wear would be needed protection from potentially harsh punishment.²³

*A scream, shrill and high, rent the shuddering sky,
And they knew that some danger was near:
The Beaver turned pale to the tip of its tail,
And even the Butcher felt queer.*

In what sense did the Butcher feel queer?²⁴

*"Tis the voice of the Jubjub!" he suddenly cried.
(This man, that they used to call "Dunce.")
"As the Bellman would tell you," he added with pride,
"I have uttered that sentiment once."*



Gardner Teal's Jubjub (Van Vechten & Ellis, 1897)

Could *Jubjub* be Thai? In 1855, King Mongkut of Siam concluded the Bowring Treaty, opening Siam (Thailand) to international trade, and sailors' cant (jargon) gained access to the Thai language. Phonetically, จูบจูบ is *Jubjub*, and it means *kiss kiss* (i.e., kisses on the mouth, as opposed to หอม, *hom*, a kiss on the cheek). *Rak na jub jub* is a common Thai greeting/parting reserved for dear ones (i.e., "I love you, kiss kiss"). If that is a referent, it makes Jubjubs some manner of exotic lovebirds. (Of course, that's mere suspicion on my part.)

*"Tis the note of the Jubjub! Keep count, I entreat;
You will find I have told it you twice.
'Tis the song of the Jubjub! The proof is complete,
If only I've stated it thrice."*

*The Beaver had counted with scrupulous care,
Attending to every . . .*

This is, of course, going to be a rule-of-three thing, and what follows is a math lesson by the Butcher. I'm going to skip it. I think it's funny, but (like Dodgson) I'm a math professor. My experience tells me that, if I start math-splaining the next 73125 stanzas, then I could lose approximately 85% of the readers.

*The method employed I would gladly explain,
While I have it so clear in my head,
If I had but the time and you had but the brain—
But much yet remains to be said."*

The Butcher proceeds with a Lesson in Natural History:

*"As to temper the Jubjub's a desperate bird,
Since it lives in perpetual passion:
Its taste in costume is entirely absurd—
It is ages ahead of the fashion:"*

Is the Jubjub a symbol of gay love? Is it desperate and living in perpetual passion because of the difficulties it has finding mates? Does "its absurd costume" refer to cross-dressing?

*"But it knows any friend it has met once before:
It never will look at a bribe:
And in charity-meetings, it stands at the door,
And collects—though it does not subscribe."*

As sequestered as the Jubjub's love-life must be, it is clear why it would know "*any friend it has met once before*." As for never looking at a bribe: Jubjubs must be trusted not to ever reveal each other's secret. The word *charity*, from the Latin *caritas*, means love—I would suggest that standing at the door and collecting at charity-meetings but never subscribing means it flirts with women who come on to it, but it never makes them a bride.

The Butcher describes the Jubjub's flavor, storage, and handling, and the Beaver's Lesson concludes

*The Butcher would gladly have talked till next day,
But he felt that the Lesson must end,
And he wept with delight in attempting to say
He considered the Beaver his friend.*

*While the Beaver confessed, with affectionate looks
More eloquent even than tears,
It had learned in ten minutes far more
than all books
Would have taught it in seventy years.*

*They returned hand-in-hand, and the Bellman,
unmanned
(For a moment) with noble emotion,
Said "This amply repays all the wearisome days
We have spent on the billowy ocean!"*

What is this "noble emotion" by which the Bellman was momentarily "unmanned?" Love! The Greeks identified various forms of love.²⁵ Aristotle identifies *philia* as the highest form of love, and says it is "both necessary to happiness and noble in itself."²⁶

*Such friends, as the Beaver and Butcher became,
Have seldom if ever been known;
In winter or summer, 'twas always the same—
You could never meet either alone.*

*And when quarrels arose—as one frequently finds
Quarrels will, spite of every endeavour—
The song of the Jubjub recurred to their minds,
And cemented their friendship for ever!*

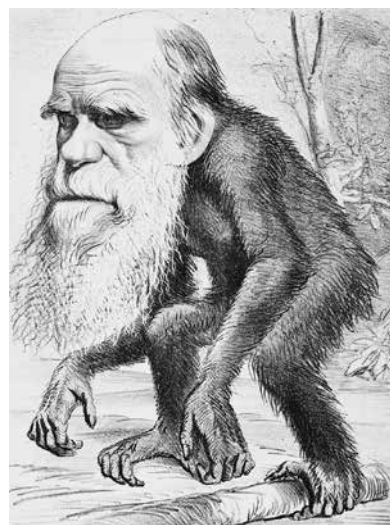
Man, that's beautiful! I don't think one word of it needs to be construed.

In Fit the 6th: *The Barrister's Dream*, we get a glimpse of a Snark (a dreamland apparition, cloaked, costumed, and viewed from behind):

*But the Barrister, weary of proving in vain
That the Beaver's lace-making was wrong,
Fell asleep, and in dreams saw the creature
quite plain
That his fancy had dwelt on so long.*

*He dreamed that he stood in a shadowy Court,
Where the Snark, with a glass in its eye,
Dressed in gown, bands, and wig,
was defending a pig
On the charge of deserting its sty.*

"A Venerable Orang-outang" from
The Hornet, 1871



The Barrister citing an infringement of rights links the Beaver, its microscope, and lace needles²⁷ to the well-documented concerns that Dodgson (and Darwin)²⁸ had about vivisection. Carroll was in the middle of writing *The Hunting of the Snark* when the Magnan case burst into the headlines and gained huge notoriety. Dodgson was vehemently opposed to vivisection and wrote two articles on the issue.²⁹ Despite his usual practice, he signed these editorials on vivisection using his penname, no doubt to bring attention to the cause. "Charles was bucked up by 'several communications,' including a flattering letter from Frances Power Cobbe . . . who later quoted Charles's letter in an article she published in the *New Quarterly Magazine*."³⁰

Charges were brought by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) against the French-trained physiologist Dr. Magnan and four British physicians jointly accused of aiding and abetting actions that did unlawfully illtreat, abuse, and torture certain animals.³¹ The court ruled that the case brought by the RSPCA was proper and the defendants were required to pay all legal costs. However, Dr. Magnan had fled to Paris before the trial began (i.e., the pig had deserted the sty!), and because it could not be proved that the others had participated, charges were dismissed.

That loss, however, was overturned in the court of public opinion. "The year 1875 was a milestone for British animal rights activism. Building off the popular outrage over Magnan, the author, feminist, and animal rights campaigner Frances Power Cobbe formed the Society for the Protection of Animals Liable to Vivisection (and, later, the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, which continues to this day). With the assistance of sympathetic members of Parliament, Cobbe drafted a bill regulating vivisection."³²

Though little known today, Cobbe was a great nineteenth-century thinker and writer. In her time, she ranked among the greatest living Englishwomen.³³ By



Frances Cobbe

the fruits of her journalism, she supported herself and her “dear friend” Mary Lloyd.³⁴ She was the author of dozens of books and articles on morals, science, Darwinism, society, women’s rights, animal’s rights, and more.

In an etching and three photographs of Frances Cobbe, she appears to be wearing a monocle chain. “. . . *the Snark, with a glass in its eye. . .*” I think it is possible, if not likely, that Frances Cobbe is the Snark who took over the Barrister’s dreamland court, commandeered the judge and jury, and continued to argue even after they all left the court.

*The Judge left the Court, looking deeply disgusted:
But the Snark, though a little aghast,
As the lawyer to whom the defence was intrusted,
Went bellowing on to the last.*

In Fit the 7th: *The Banker’s Fate*, what do we learn? The Banker’s plan was to use money to catch a Snark. This seems not to work well.

*A Bandersnatch swiftly drew nigh
And grabbed at the Banker, who shrieked
in despair,
...
He offered large discount—he offered a cheque
(Drawn “to bearer”) for seven-pounds-ten:
But the Bandersnatch merely extended its neck
And grabbed at the Banker again.*

Did Carroll intend a double-double-entendre? On its face, a cheque drawn to bearer for seven-pounds ten-shillings is like cash; it can be exchanged at the bank by whoever is carrying it. Such a cheque in today’s money would be worth around £1,100 (\$1,370). However, it might also be noted that 7 lbs. 10 oz. was a typical weight for a newborn in England c. 1875,³⁵ and a “bearer” of such a newborn might have need of a cheque, such

as just described. And depending on the circumstances surrounding the conception of the newborn and its relationship to the drafter of the cheque, drawing cheques “to bearer” might also serve the purpose of masking the reason the payments are being made.

Everything’s got a moral, if only you can find it.

In Fit the 8th: *The Vanishing*, Candle-ends finds a Snark and plunges into a chasm. *Finis coronat opus.*

So, Do You Accept My Proposal?

Announcing the engagement of:

The Hunting of the Snark—to—a search for a Bride

And, marrying:

The Vanishing—to—the loss of Student status
at Christ Church,

A hilarious, formerly unthinkable,
reveal to a 147-year-old April Fool’s joke.

April Fools!³⁶

Gentle Reader, in Part II, I will show you a trick—some manner of trance-insubstantiation—that Carroll invented for crossing literary space and time, in his words, “by actual transference of [our] immaterial essence, such as we meet with in ‘Esoteric Buddhism.’” Using that trick, I will transport us to the space-time coordinates of precisely when and where Carroll buried his last clues about the Boojum!

Endnotes

¹ . . . I have courted it for years. Over the past 147 years, many people have suggested countless things Carroll’s Snark Hunt might represent. I think my theory is entirely novel. But why trust me; believe the experts. I first proposed my naïve conception to the Society at the Fall 2018 meeting, during the Q&A after Adam Gopnik’s talk. To a chorus of snickering, I was told— appropriately—that’s a new one, but everyone is entitled to his opinion. At the Spring 2022 meeting, Dr. Selwyn Goodacre and others assured me my theory did not duplicate anything that they were aware of. Fortunately, Clare Imholtz, who has contributed greatly to Carrollian research, was among those present for the second airing of my theory. As she has done for many others in the past, she encouraged me to write this paper for you, Gentle Reader. (This will be my third time laying out my theory. Applying the Rule of Three, well, Q.E.D.)

² Locke, John, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Thomas Basset, 1689, Book IV, ch. XXI, section 4.

³ This is hotly disputed! There are Snarkologists who believe that there are only *nine* Snark Hunters on board since the Boots is not depicted in any illustration; they make out that “Boots” is a portmanteau of “Bonnets” and “Hoods.” Yet they pronounce the *oo*’s in Boots like *biits* rather than *biuts* (as in roots)! As Lewis Carroll indicates in the Preface, “Such is Human Perversity.” The “9-ers”

could be right, and we could all be pronouncing “Boots” wrong. But then one wonders why it fell to the maker of Bonnets-and-Hoods to polish the Baker’s three pairs of boots? I say, there’s your riddle!

⁴ I certainly mean no offense or disrespect to the modern women of today, who have little in common with the horrendously sexist stereotypes employed throughout this article.

⁵ *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

⁶ “bird (n.2): maiden, young girl; woman of noble birth, damsel, lady, . . . c. 1200.” *Online Etymology Dictionary*.

⁷ Delia, R. D., “Diana, Isis, or the Moon,” in *Egyptian Religion: The Last Thousand Years* (Clarysse, W., ed.), Peeters, 1998, pp. 539–50. Stories told of Bastet were syncretized, attaching to Artemis, who was associated with cats, and later to Diana, who transformed into a cat in several myths. Under Christian influence, the association of women and cats was generally not positive. See Engels, D. W., *Classical Cats: The Rise and Fall of the Sacred Cat*, Routledge, 2001, pp. 48–87.

⁸ In 1855, Alphonse Toussenel described the cat as “an animal so keen on maintaining her appearance, so silky, so tiny, so eager for caresses, so ardent and responsive, so graceful and supple . . . an animal that makes the night her day, and who shocks decent people with the noise of her orgies, can have only one single analogy in this world, and that analogy is of the feminine kind,” *Zoologies Passionelle*, English translation by Kathleen Kete, quoted in *The Beast in the Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, University of California Press, 1995, p. 120.

⁹ Ladies’ rules of conduct: “1. If unmarried and under thirty, she is never to be in the company of a man without a chaperone. Except for a walk to church or the park in the early morning, she may not walk alone, but should always be accompanied by another lady, a man, or a servant.” An even more restrictive view is that “if she cannot walk with her younger sisters and their governess, or the maid cannot be spared to walk with her, she had better stay at home or confine herself to the square garden.” See Pool, Daniel, *What Jane Austin Ate and Charles Dickens Knew*, Touchstone, 1994, p. 55.

¹⁰ Darby, Nell, “Walking a dangerous road: women’s safety on the streets,” *History Extra*, “The official website for BBC History Magazine and BBC History Revealed,” posted October 4, 2021.

¹¹ Gardner, Martin (ed.), *The Annotated Hunting of the Snark*, W. W. Norton, 2006, pp. 37–38.

¹² Hatch, Beatrice, “Lewis Carroll” in *The Strand Magazine*, April 1898, quoted in Cohen, Morton, *Lewis Carroll: A Biography*, Knopf, 1995, p. 235.

¹³ —, “In Memoriam Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll),” *The Guardian*, January 19, 1898, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 234.

¹⁴ Heath, Peter L, Introduction to Lewis Carroll’s *La Guida di Bragia: A Ballad Opera for the Marionette Theatre*, LCSNA, 2007, p. vii.

¹⁵ Appleton, Stephanie, “Shakespeare in 100 Objects: Thimble,” *Shakespeare Birthplace Trust* (www.shakespeare.org.uk).

¹⁶ “The Origin of Wedding Rings: Ancient Tradition or Marketing Invention?,” *Gemological Institute of America* (<https://4cs.gia.edu>).

¹⁷ Clark, Anne, *Lewis Carroll: A Biography*, Dent, 1979, p. 10.

¹⁸ Letter to Frances Hardman, May 14, 1882.

¹⁹ Hudson, Derek, *Lewis Carroll: An Illustrated Biography*, Clarkson N. Potter, 1977, pp. 145–147.

²⁰ To say the least, I am no fan of the theoretical construct known as “Death of the Author.” However, Charles Dodgson himself (speaking specifically on the meaning of the *Snark*) said, “words mean more than we mean to express when we use them: so a whole book ought to mean a great deal more than the writer meant. So, whatever good meanings are in the book, I’m glad to accept as the meaning of the book.” Kate Lyon has found many “good meanings” in the *Snark*, intended or not; they are creative and deeply moving and add greatly to the value of the work.



Janusz Stanny's *Snark-hunting ship*
(Wyprawa na żmirlacza, Oficyna Naukowa, 2005)

- ²¹ Advice from a father to his son in Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, Act III, line 50 (1912).
- ²² *Polari* is "a form of slang used by some groups of people in Britain, especially by gay people and especially in the past: a secret language, which has now largely fallen out of use, but was historically spoken by gay men and female impersonators. . . . It grew out of the world of entertainment, stretching back from West End theatres, through to nineteenth-century music halls and beyond." —Baker, Paul, "A brief history of Polari: the curious after-life of the dead language for gay men," *The Conversation*, the-conversation.com. Polari's influences included Victorian Cockney backslang (e.g., "eek" in Polari is short for "ecaf" which is "face" in backslang; cf., "SNARK" and "KRANS").
- A feature of this secret form of communication was the use of signs, nods, and glances. Dodgson's connection to the London theatres is well known, and *The Snark* has a lot of nodding, winking, and head-wagging going on. Two examples: the Bellman "sagaciously nodding" to the Butcher, and the Baker "making an effort to wink with one eye" at the Beaver.
- ²³ The death penalty for sodomy had been abolished in 1861, but in 1875 men could still get life in prison for consensual sex with another man.—Norton, Rictor (ed.), *Homosexuality in Nineteenth-Century England: A Sourcebook* (rictornorton.co.uk).
- ²⁴ *The Oxford English Dictionary* attributes an early use of the word "queer" in the sense of homosexual to the Marquess of Queensberry (Bosie's father), in 1894. Should that be backdated to 1876 based on this footnote's referent?
- ²⁵ The English word "love" subsumes a half-dozen Greek concepts: *eros*, *storge*, *philia*, *philautia*, *xenia*, and *agape*. "Depending upon the nature of the persons involved and the basis of their relationship, *philia* is distinguished by Aristotle into many different kinds . . . '*arete-philia*' draws together equals, . . . '*erotic philia*' attracts the sensual lover, . . . '*companion-philia*' holds together fellow workers, shipmates, soldiers in a company . . ."—Tracy, Theodore, "Perfect Friendship in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics," *Illinois Classical Studies*, vol. 4, 1979, p. 65.
- ²⁶ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated and edited by H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, 1926.
- ²⁷ Kluge, Götz, "Lace Making: An Infringement of Right" (www.academia.edu).
- ²⁸ The Beaver "*paced on the deck / Or would sit making lace in the bow*," and as Holiday depicts in his illustration, also carried a microscope. Darwin, describing using a microscope on board ship, advises "fixing objects to be dissected by direct instead of transmitted light. For this end, short fine pins and lace-needles should be procured."—Darwin, C. R. "On the use of the microscope on board ship," in J. F. W. Herschel ed., *A manual of scientific enquiry; prepared for the use of Her Majesty's Navy: and adapted for travellers in general*. John Murray, 1849, p. 391. The word beaver as slang for a beard, admits of further entanglements with Darwin. Darwin's beard, first grown when he was on the *Beagle*, was famous! In *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (John Murray, 1871, Vol. II, p. 383), he writes, "It appears that our male ape-like progenitors acquired their beards as an ornament to charm or excite the opposite sex."
- ²⁹ "Vivisection as a sign of the times," *Pall Mall Gazette*, February 12, 1875; "Some Popular Fallacies About Vivisection," *Fortnightly Review*, June 1, 1875.
- ³⁰ Cohen, Morton, *Lewis Carroll: A Biography*, Knopf, 1996, p. 381. Also worth noting: Dodgson and Darwin exchanged three brief but congenial letters in 1872 (with Dodgson offering some photographs to Darwin to aid in documenting his observations on facial expressions). Completing the triangle: Cobbe and Darwin met in 1868 and became good friends. But post-Magnan, Cobbe expressed public enmity towards Darwin over his objections to the legislation she helped draft and over his continued, qualified support for vivisection. See www.darwinproject.ac.uk.
- ³¹ "Prosecution at Norwich: Experiment on Animals," *The British Medical Journal*, Dec. 12, 1874, pp. 751–754.
- ³² In addition to detailing Cobbe's role in the vivisection debate, the article argues that the portrayal of Darwin as not supporting animal rights was a misunderstanding of his nuanced, and politically astute, position in the debate. Johnson, Eric Michael, "Charles Darwin and the Vivisection Outrage," *Scientific American* blog, October 6, 2011 (blogs.scientificamerican.com).
- ³³ Mitchell, Sally, *Frances Power Cobbe: Victorian Feminist, Journalist, Reformer*, University of Virginia Press, 2004, p. 3.
- ³⁴ Frances and Mary met in 1860 and the two lived together for over 32 years until Lloyd's death in 1896. They maintained a friendship the like of which has "seldom if ever been known; in winter or summer, 'twas always the same — you could never meet either alone." In her letters, Frances identified Mary variously as either her "husband," or her "wife."
- ³⁵ "Edinburgh, 1847–1920: Mean Birth Weight," in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Volume 52, Supplement 1, January 1998.
- ³⁶ "In nineteenth-century England, April Fool's Day was centuries old, well-established, and its pranks pervasively participated in."—Johnson, Ben, "April Fools Day 1st April," *Historic UK, the History and Heritage Accommodations Guide*, www.historic-uk.com.
- "In a letter to his publisher, Macmillan and Company, dated 17 January 1876, Carroll wrote that the Snark should be advertised 'to be published on the 1st of April,' and adding that surely this is the fittest day for it to appear."—Wakeling, Edward, "Introductory Notes to *G10—The Hunting of the Snark*—Printed Proofs of the Illustrations" in the Christ Church Library, Carroll Collection (www.chch.ox.ac.uk).

Poetry Quoted
in the *Sylvie and Bruno* Books

LISA BUDD

Several extracts from poems are quoted without attribution in *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*; perhaps Carroll assumed readers' familiarity with them. In Dame Gillian Beer's collection of Carroll's poems, *Jabberwocky and Other*

Nonsense, Penguin Classics, 2012, they are included as though they are by Carroll, even one by Tennyson! The actual authors are as follows, with chapters and pages in the original books and page numbers in Beer:

SYLVIE AND BRUNO

Preface p. xix | p. 311

Who sins in hope; who, sinning, says,
'Sorrow for sin God's judgment stays!'
Against God's Spirit he lies; quite stops
Mercy with insult; dares, and drops,
Like a scorch'd fly, that spins in vain
Upon the axis of its pain,
Then takes its doom, to limp and crawl,
Blind and forgot, from fall to fall.

"*The Scorched Fly*,"

Coventry Patmore 1823–1896

Preface p. xxi, not included in Beer

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.
He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

"*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*,"

Samuel Taylor Coleridge 1772–1834

Chapter V p. 61 | p. 312

From sackcloth couch the Monk arose,
With toil his stiffen'd limbs he rear'd;
A hundred years had flung their snows
On his thin locks and floating beard.

"*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*,"

Sir Walter Scott 1771–1832

Chapter XIV p. 189 | p. 321

He either fears his fate too much,
Or his desert is small,
That puts it not unto the touch
To win or lose it all.

"*My Dear and Only Love*,"

James Graham, Marquis of Montrose

1612–1650

SYLVIE AND BRUNO CONCLUDED

Chapter III p. 48 | p. 326

Take, O boatman, thrice thy fee,
Take, I give it willingly;
For, invisible to thee,
Spirits twain have crossed with me.

"*The Passage*,"

Johann Ludwig Uhland 1787–1862

Chapter XVI p. 257 | p. 330

We doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo
And Victor he must ever be.

"*Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*,"

Alfred, Lord Tennyson 1809–1892

Chapter XVI p. 261 | not included in Beer

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart.

"*To a Skylark*,"

Percy Bysshe Shelley 1792–1822

MICAELA RODGERS

A whimsically not-so-surprising third award was also announced: The Bellman's Prize, funded for the past few years by the Dean of the



Several judges, in addition to award sponsor Linda Cassady, assessed the Wonderland Award submissions: newly appointed USC Libraries Carrollian Fellow Franziska Kohlt; poet and USC professor of English Molly Bendall; USC professor of Architecture Amy Murphy; and LCSNA vice president Amy Plummer.

[The Wonderland Award is an annual competition, established in 2005 by USC Libraries Board of Councilors member -slash- LCSNA president emerita Linda Cassady, showcasing the interpretive talents of students from USC and other Southern California institutions, as they transform the life and works of Lewis Carroll into new creative and/or scholarly works. The student submissions will all eventually become part of the USC Digital Library. The LCSNA provides the first-prize winner with a \$3000 award. All three winners receive student memberships to the Society for a year and a print subscription to the Knight Letter.]

The Queen's Gambit: *Paint the Roses*

SARAH K. CROTZER

For a public domain property with an established audience, it's surprising how rarely modern *Alice*-themed tabletop games feel like *Alice in Wonderland*. For the most part, designers are content to take one small aspect of the stories and attach it loosely—sometimes very loosely—to a lightweight game with just one or two simplistic mechanisms. Often, Lewis Carroll's carefully crafted nonsense ends up as a catch-all shorthand for “crazy” or “wacky,” while the wide cast of identifiable characters makes for a ready-made rogues' gallery to rival any superhero comic. Throw in some slight lip service to a Mad Tea Party, and—bam!—you have an *Alice* game, supposedly.

Paint the Roses is the second tabletop game from a newer designer, Ben Goldman (following 2020's *Oceans*), and it provides a refreshing change of perspective. There is no attempt to cover Alice's adventures here; in fact, Alice herself appears nowhere in the base game. Instead, *Paint the Roses* boasts a streamlined design that, while not totally relying on it, integrates the *Wonderland* theme in such a way that the game's mechanics would be less meaningful without it. That's something I've never seen before, and it makes me excited to share it with other potential players.

The game was originally the subject of a very successful Kickstarter campaign in fall 2021, arriving for backers in spring 2022 and appearing on general retail sale later that summer. For the purposes of review, I'll be looking at *Paint the Roses: Deluxe Edition*, which closely replicates the full Kickstarter package—but I'll get into the little differences and complications later.

First, let's go through the little door and into “the beautiful garden.”

THE GAME

The story of *Paint the Roses* takes you through the game's mechanics backwards, which is an interesting if possibly coincidental bit of looking-glass structure. You and your

fellow players are, cooperatively, the Queen of Hearts's royal gardeners. Remember these doomed individuals? You'll spend the game creeping around the garden's edge, which doubles as a scoring track. Your goal is to fill up the garden with rosebushes—hexagonal tiles—according to the Queen's changing whims. Here, the whims are literally cards kept secret in players' hands, each depicting a pattern of two rosebushes. Each hedge is trimmed into one of four suit shapes, with blooms of one of four colors. To move ahead on the track, the gardeners have to get points; to get points, team members have to correctly determine each other's cards; to determine the cards—well, that's the hardest part of all.

Did I mention that the Queen of Hearts is chasing you around the board? Did I mention she has an axe? Did I mention she speeds up the better you play?

Underneath all the thematic elements, this is a logic deduction game based around limited communication.

Many such games restrict how everyone at the table can speak, but here it's very simple: You just can't talk about your own card. Instead, on your turn, you have to place a tile in the garden, which is laid out in a hex grid. That tile—a single rosebush—will touch between one and six other tiles. Do any of the pairs (your tile and one that it touches) match the pattern shown on your card? If so, you'll indicate that by adding tiny colored cubes on top of the newly placed tile. See three matches? Add three cubes. Just one match? Just one cube. Other players will add cubes of their own color, too, depending on how many matches they see for the pattern on their own card. Then, at the end of the turn, the group will collectively choose one card to solve. The gardeners will only get to move forward on the track if the card is correctly deduced, but the Queen moves forward regardless. She moves *double* if the group guess is wrong.

Unsurprisingly, the number of possible combinations between matches of four colors and four shapes can send players into analysis paralysis, but there are various ways to mitigate that scenario. Most tile place-





Each new whim card dictates what pattern you will try to communicate to your teammates through tile placement.

ments boil the choices down pretty rapidly. This is especially true at higher player counts of four or five, when placing a tile is more likely to reveal *something* useful about *somebody's* card. Also, players can select their card from three different decks—Easy, Medium, and Hard—which affects the complexity of the pattern depicted. Easy cards always match colors only, while Mediums match colors or shapes (never both). However, the complexity of the card also changes how far the gardeners can move on the board.

Sometimes, a solution will pop right out at the team and ensure an easy, if fleeting, success. However, the time will almost inevitably come when the team won't have perfect information to guess a card. There's also a possibility that individual players won't have tiles available to place, or a space in which to play them, that allows them to communicate a helpful card clue to their teammates. The team will be forced to guess one card per turn regardless. Unfortunately, this is especially common toward the end of the game, when the Queen can cover far more ground at one time, and your team will be desperate to stay alive. The consensus online seems to confirm my own experience: *Paint the Roses* requires both intense personal concentration and good interpersonal discussion skills, pretty much at the same time and throughout every turn. It's very hard, but very satisfying, to win—and easy to lose right at the last hurdle.

COMPONENTS & DESIGN

Paint the Roses comes from North Star Game Studio, publishers of the *Evolution* series (including *Oceans*, among others), as well as the extremely popular *Quacks of Quedlinburg* (2018). These are all lushly produced medium-weight games that cram a lot into the box; they are dripping in components and immersive, thematic design; *Paint the Roses* is no exception. The colorful and

whimsical art by Jacqui Davis (*Viticulture*) does a lot of the heavy lifting in communicating a friendly tone. The bright and cheerful box, complete with a floofy purple Cheshire Cat, should have a lot of wide appeal, and that continues on to the components inside.

An overhead view of the Queen's verdant garden takes up most of the 12 × 17 in. board, with her castle depicted at one end and the score track wrapped around the edge. There are also starting places for three single-color plastic miniatures: the gardeners (ivory), the White Rabbit (ivory), and the Queen of Hearts (red). Even with three card decks and a “greenhouse” for tile selection, *Paint the Roses* brings a lot of table presence without taking up an outrageous amount of table space.

A few components may cause mild concern. At 2 × 3 in., the cards are only as big as they need to be, with a nice linen finish—but they're thin, and I don't think they'll stand up to many riffle shuffles. The colored



A new game of *Paint the Roses* is ready to begin, with starting tiles placed on the board in assigned locations.

wooden cubes are perfectly durable, but each one is a tiny 8 mm, easy to fumble in big hands and a choking hazard for small kids and pets. Finally, while I applaud North Star's decision to include sheets on which players can keep track of tile placement and clues for individual players' cards, the pads are a fraction of the thickness required. Players are going to run out of clue sheets in just a handful of games! Fortunately, fans have already designed a web-based sheet that can be regenerated over and over again.

The most important discussion to have about components may be the difference between the retail edition of *Paint the Roses* and the *Deluxe Edition* available online. In the standard retail version, the garden is a single layer of thick cardboard, with cardboard hex tiles placed on top to represent the rosebushes. *The Deluxe* garden, on the other hand, is dual-layer cardboard, with recessed hex spaces and 4-mm-thick acrylic rosebush



All seven expansion decks (plus the Caterpillar deck), with examples of additional expansion components.

tiles. This is a significant upgrade to both the aesthetic appeal and the durability of the game. The *Deluxe Edition* also comes with a custom-made two-level red GameTrayz insert that allows you to neatly and efficiently sort all the components—cards, tiles, miniatures, everything—into the elegant gaming equivalent of a Whitman’s Sampler. Cleanup takes just a fraction of the time you would normally spend sorting everything into little baggies.

The *Deluxe Edition* is one of the most well-designed packages I’ve seen for a tabletop game, especially a game with a lot of little components that *doesn’t* intend you to spend an entire afternoon at the table building Rome or terraforming a planet. It’s just a pleasure to open and explore, and it makes the presentation to new players really sing. However, it is twice the cost of the retail edition, albeit not for cosmetic upgrades alone. Instead, the entire lower level of the insert is devoted to...well...

THE EXPANSION(S)

Expansions are tricky. When they come out months or even years after a game’s original release, they usually feel like (and often are) a simple cash grab. You have to ask yourself: What about the original game wasn’t good enough? On the other hand, when games originate on Kickstarter, built-in expansions often become a way to bloat out a production with stretch goals. The more people pay money, the more the publisher gussies up their original design.

Escape the Castle sets the gardeners a new task: Find five big cardboard keys and win their freedom from the clutches of the Queen. To do that, you’ll have to play *Paint the Roses* with the addition of two small decks of cards, each with the top card flipped up. The Queen of Hearts’s deck will impose some rule that makes finishing the game harder: She may ban a specific kind of whim card, for instance, or move extra spaces when tiles with a certain color or shape are played. You’ll choose one

of six decks for the other, “helper” side, each featuring a different “loveable Wonderland character” (North Star’s terminology, not mine!), who will assist you when you fulfill smaller, specific conditions. Some modules are easy to intuit: The White Rabbit awards keys based on how quickly your team can fill the garden with tiles, while the Jabberwocky (yes, the publisher’s error) grants a key every time you “destroy” (flip over and neutralize) two tiles of specific colors or shapes. Other decks are slightly more complex.

The real question, then, is whether the expansions add value of play. I would say they do—conditionally. The game is excellent on its own, but while the expansion modules may not be necessary, they also add a lot of fun and (positive) frustration. Frankly, I think they make a better expert variation of *Paint the Roses* than the one described in the base game’s rulebook, which simply includes fewer starter tiles in the garden. However, I also think any play group will quickly identify the one or two modules they like best and never play the others again. Is that a waste? It might be—but what North Star has done is take a fairly standard concept of an expansion deck and separate it out into a bunch of tiny decks instead. It wouldn’t bother me if I only used 20 or 30 cards out of 70 or 80 in a single deck, so why should it bother me here? Plus, it’s fun to have all of these Wonderland



The top layer of the Deluxe Edition carefully separates and arranges the tiles, cubes, and miniature components for easy access.

characters in the same style. Isn't that why many of us collect different illustrated editions of the books?

CONCLUSION

It should be obvious by this point that I thoroughly enjoy *Paint the Roses*. It would be my pick for the best *Alice*-themed tabletop game on the market today. I think the designer, Ben Goldman, has done a great job of picking a slightly unsung element of the popular *Alice* narrative and building a really fresh and fanciful game around it that will make a lot of people wonder, "Why didn't I think of that?" Many commercial games—past and present—have utilized the iconography of the *Alice* books in an aesthetically appealing way, but no other has based itself in the genre of logic puzzles, which Dodgson so clearly enjoyed devising and sharing. This is a crowded marketplace; I can think of at least half a dozen other *Alice*-themed games currently in print, a couple of which are significantly more popular—and yet, *Paint the Roses* manages to stand out in style.

My one lasting criticism is that, with the shift from a horror aesthetic to Jacqui Davis's much more cuddly depictions, *Paint the Roses* will be misinterpreted by many as a "family" game. It isn't—at all. The box is more than generous in suggesting an age of 11+ and a time of 60 minutes. Unless your kids are especially calm, patient, and possessed of some aptitude for logic puzzles, this game will probably either frustrate them or absolutely bore them rigid. That's not a flaw, per se, but the welcoming art confuses the issue enough to deserve a disclaimer. Conversely, there are adults who will not want to play a game that is so colorful and cheerful-looking—but such people can't be helped, I find, and should be left to their individual fancies.

I think it's also true that some players will not like the game because of imperfect information. In particular, Carrollians who are passionate about game theory or mathematical probability in games may find the forced card-guessing too irritating to tolerate, despite the built-in mechanisms that attempt to counter such eventualities. That's fair. The players who are going to enjoy the game more are those who like logic puzzles but remain aware that this is, to some degree, a particularly intense party game. Being able to know, trust, and have a good time with your game group is absolutely essential to playing this particular title. Taking it seriously, but not too seriously, is important—reinforcing, I think, an important element of the original *Alice* stories. The more you can laugh with your fellow players about a last-minute run-in with the Queen of Hearts's axe, the better time you will have.

Similarly, player count is an important consideration. The game was obviously built for a higher player count, but a slight variant allows for two- and three-player games. While it's possible to win at those lower counts, players will almost certainly need to place tiles to elimi-

nate or whittle away at excess possibilities, costing precious turns and bringing the Queen ever closer. Honestly, I think the sweet spot is four players. With four players, a team probably stands the best chance of winning by logic alone: Every tile placement should give a clue for someone's card, but good placement won't be stymied by filling the garden too fast, as five players can do.

Right now, you can buy three distinct products: the base *Paint the Roses* game, the separate *Escape the Castle* expansion, and *Paint the Roses: Deluxe Edition*, which appears to be identical to (and is probably the remnant of) the Kickstarter print run, combining the base game and *Escape the Castle* in one box, with upgraded components. Additionally, *Paint the Roses* has just been released to the public on BoardGameArena.com, where gamers can play hundreds of classic and modern board games for free. This is part of an increasing push by publishers, since Covid, to boost the profile of new or back-

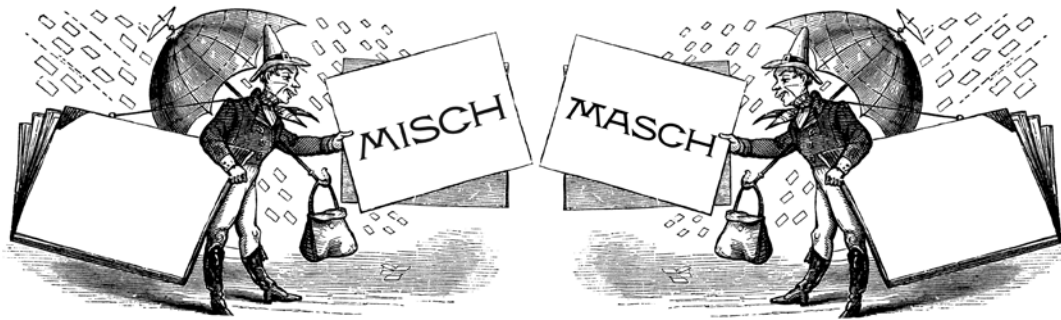


The three game miniatures: the White Rabbit, the Queen of Hearts, and the Royal Gardeners.

listed games through digital implementation. Clearly, if you want to play *Paint the Roses*, you are faced with the embarrassment of choice.

In fact, the BGA adaptation gives me the strongest possible rationale to recommend you play the game before you buy it. At time of writing, *Paint the Roses* has a very slick, easy-to-understand digital adaptation, complete with automated clue sheets and optional "Cheshire Kitten" module. (It remains to be seen if more expansion content will be added.) I recommend strongly that you set aside an hour and give the game a whirl (for free!). It won't be the same as playing around the table with your friends, but it will give you a good sense of the mechanisms and arc of gameplay, and you can try it at different player counts. So long as you come prepared to lose and laugh about it, there's really no way you won't win—even when the Queen catches you at the last possible second.

No, seriously. She's going to get you!



Leaves from the Deanery Garden



I have some clippings from new English-language books that I've been hoarding for a while; I hope that at least some of them are still fresh enough for Knight Letter:

1. In *James Joyce and Photography* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2022), Georgina Binnie-Wright discusses the influence of Lewis Carroll on James Joyce, pp. 7–8, 118–121, 140–141. Carroll's photo "St. George and the Dragon" is reproduced therein as well.
2. Carroll's take on prehistoric monsters is discussed in Richard Fallon's *Reimagining Dinosaurs in Late Victorian and Edwardian Literature: How the 'Terrible Lizard' Became a Transatlantic Cultural Icon* (Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 27, 66–69, 72, 85.
3. In the Festschrift titled *Reading Victorian Literature: Essays in Honour of J. Hillis Miller* (Edinburgh University Press, 2019),

John Maynard's essay "Repetition and/of/in Victorian Pleasures" analyzes "The Walrus and the Carpenter" from that point of view, p. 352.

Yours sincerely,
Markus Lång, Ph.D.

Like Charles Dickens, Charles Dodgson had a bleak view of the Justice system. It is likely that the trial in Wonderland is a rare event to which the Queen of Hearts has given begrudging, reluctant assent rather than resorting to her usual solution to the slightest misbehavior (thus the Gryphon's excitement about the trial; also note that the less aristocratic Mock Turtle is not invited to attend). Though lower in rank than the Kings and Queens threatened at the croquet ground, the Knave is a courtier. Is it because the theft of the tarts has so closely touched the Queen that a trial is required?

In any case, the question of "Who stole the tarts?" is asked, but actual guilt is never proven. The culprit's identity is never confirmed. As the Knave says in his futile self-representation, his presumed authorship of the poem cannot be proved. The King's clever accusation that the Knave has perfidiously disguised his hand is mere speculative theory, contrived to twist the facts to fit the crime. Nor should we forget the King's eagerness to accuse the innocent Hatter of theft. Alice, who knows nothing at all of the case, is called as a witness; her "important" testimony will be interpreted willy-nilly to frame the hapless accused. This case is reminiscent of the one trumped up against Anne Boleyn (according to one theory, the inspiration for "Sing a Song of Sixpence"), her brother, and other aristocratic gentlemen. His attendance on the Court and his very name may make the Knave a con-

venient scapegoat, but the evidence against him is as flimsy as the Judge.

It is easy to overlook the fact of a presumed trial in *Looking-Glass*: The King's second Messenger has been released from prison just in time to witness the battle of the Lion and Unicorn. Given the prescience demonstrated by the White Queen, we may infer that punishments in this alternate world precede crimes but do not—and cannot—prevent their committal. Is the “order” of such events release–imprisonment–trial–crime?

In addition, according to Sabine Chaouche's *Student Consumer Culture in Nineteenth-Century Oxford*, C. L. Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) believed that seventy dogs lived at Christ Church in 1850, contrary to the rules.

David L. Leal, Letter to the Editor, The Baker Street Journal 72.3 (Autumn 2022), The Baker Street Irregulars. [Reference is to a letter from CLD to Frances Power Cobbe, May 21, 1875.]

“Lewis Carroll” did me the honour to apply to me the other day; but he did not flatter me as you do—at least, not much—he asked for specimens and samples.

Randolph Caldecott, letter to Julia Horatia Ewing, 4 March 1883, in Yours Pictorially: Illustrated Letters of Randolph Caldecott, Frederick Warne, 1976

Next to the cell window someone had scratched into the cement wall the question, “What did the White Rabbit know?” Greenwood was yet to figure that one out.

...

In Wonderland, the Duchess committed *lèse majesté* by slapping the Queen, but what exactly will Hatta's crime be? Here, too, proximity to royalty has its dangers as well as its rewards.

Are the innocent in *Looking-Glass Land* presumed guilty, and the guilty innocent? What does this say about the freely moving players in the chess game as well as the subsidiary characters Alice meets? We may be fairly sure the Fawn lives in a state of honest nature, but what of

Humpty-Dumpty? How has he finagled his position of royal familiarity? What political shenanigans has the Gentleman in White Paper been up to? The Tweedles come close to committing fratricide. Without the appearance of the monstrous Crow, who knows what might have happened? In fact, how many of the squares unvisited by Alice are dedicated to prisons? Such questions demand further study.

*Dr. Fernly Bowers
Beethoven, California*



He was already looking a little sad at the prospect of being returned to normal size, but there was no alternative. His Drink Me was all used up.

Donald Westlake, The Hot Rock, Overlook Duckworth, 1970

While Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters
Sons of bankers, sons of lawyers,
Turn around and say good morning
to the night

For unless they see the sky
But they can't and that is why
They know not if it's dark outside
or light.

Bernie Taupin, "Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters," Elton John's Honky Château, 1972

Mimsy Borogroves was ironing her hair. . . . Trudy Lookingglass . . . sat perched over the balcony.

Alexander Theroux, Darconville's Cat, Doubleday, 1981

This second course, of looking at the dictionary rather than through it to the language itself, was the one I followed, like Alice through the computer screen, behind which lay the superstructure of the dictionary as it developed between 1858 and 1989.

John Willinsky, Empire of Words: The Reign of the OED, Princeton University Press, 1994

Achilles—sulking, egotistical, brave, faithful in his loves, lacking compassion towards his victims but capable of magnanimity, “a kill-ease” to use Lewis Carroll's pun—has a kaleidoscope personality that never quite resolves itself, not even at the end of the book.

Alberto Manguel, Homer's The Iliad and The Odyssey: A Biography, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007

—★—
 Cheshire cat, where are you?
 I'm tryin' to find a way to fade to
 blue.
 I was here, I remember when
 there was a queen commanding
 "Cut her head!"

...
 If you're mad, that stay with me,
 We can prepare to you a cup of tea.
 We're all mad, none is banned
 Alice keep calm, you're in Won-
 derland!
Snoop Dogg, "Wonderland,"
Malice n Wonderland, 2009

—★—
 I always loved photography,
 photography itself. In the fifties I
 would look at discarded fashion
 magazines. . . . And then I found
 out that Lewis Carroll took photo-
 graphs and then through looking
 at his photographs learned about
 nineteenth-century photography.
Patti Smith, interview at City
Arts & Lectures, San Francisco,
Nov. 28, 2022

—★—
 The sloping ceilings of the attic give
 Cristabel an Alice in Wonderland
 feeling, as if she were too big for the
 room. Lying on her narrow bed, she
 imagines her legs growing until her
 feet poke out the window. It is sun-
 ny outside; the rooks are nattering
 away in the trees. She wishes she was
 on the beach with her whale. She
 wonders about the man who wrote
 the *Alice in Wonderland* book. He
 can't have been very sensible either.
Joanna Quinn, The Whalebone
Theatre, Alfred A. Knopf, 2022

—★—
 "May I introduce the beef, sir?" the
 waiter in Simpson's asked, raising
 the dome on the great silver serving
 trolley with a ponderous flourish, as
 if diners in the Grand Divan lived
 all their lives waiting for this revela-
 tion.

Kate Atkinson, Shrines of
Gaiety, Doubleday, 2022

—★—
 Their talk livened when they dis-
 cussed the poetry of Lewis Carroll,
 the piano compositions of Ravel,
 and the evils of TikTok.
Alex Vadukul, "Luddite' Teens
Don't Want Your Likes," New
York Times, December 15, 2022

—★—
 [The 22-year-old Thomas Pynchon]
 worked for Boeing in Seattle—writ-
 ing for *Bomarc Service News*, an
 internal newsletter. Although tasked
 with writing technical pieces about
 anti-aircraft missiles, Pynchon was
 characteristically wry. In "The Mad
 Hatter and the Mercury Wetted Re-
 lay" [Vol. 31, no. 16, February 1962],
 Pynchon informs readers that Lewis
 Carroll's Mad Hatter had gone mad
 from "chronic mercurialism" or
 "hatter's shakes," which could affect
 Boeing workers if certain wire-
 wrapped glass capsules explode.
 "When dealing with mercury," Pyn-
 chon warns, "even in small amounts,
 respect it and play it safe. Don't
 become a 'Mad Hatter,' you might
 find it to be much more unpleasant
 than attending a mad tea party."

Nick Ripatrzone, "Big Names
in Little Magazines: On Thomas
Pynchon's Very First Literary
Journal Appearance," LitHub.
com, December 21, 2022

—★—
 A potted Boojum tree (*Fouquieria*
columnaris), a succulent native to
 the Valley of the Candles in Baja
 California, greets visitors alongside
 a plaque inscribed with an excerpt
 from the poem at the entrance to
 the Los Angeles branch of the Cac-
 tus Store, the bicoastal shop and cre-
 ative studio specializing in rare and
 unusual xerophytic, or drought-tol-
 erant, plants. Roughly the size of an
 adult human, the Boojum — one of
 two in a shaded courtyard next to a
 greenhouse that the shop maintains
 as a specimen library — resembles
 an inverted parsnip densely studded
 on its upper half with spiky, leafy
 branches that form a broomlike
 mane, lending the plant a mien that
 in 1922 prompted the English bota-
 nist and explorer Godfrey Sykes to
 nickname the species after Carroll's
 boogeyman. Though the succulent
 may not be grotesque enough to fell
 an onlooker, it does, like many spe-
 cies in the Cactus Store's collection,
 have an almost comically inelegant
 form.

Eviana Hartman, "Why Are We
Living with Such Ugly Succu-
lents and Cactuses," T: The New
York Times Style Magazine,
Feb. 15, 2023

—★—
 Hayao Miyazaki, the studio's
 cofounder, is one of the all-time
 great imaginary world-builders—
 right up there with Lewis Carroll,
 Ursula K. Le Guin, Charles Schulz,
 Maurice Sendak, and composers
 of the Icelandic sagas.

Sam Anderson, "Spirited Away,"
The New York Times Maga-
zine, Feb. 19, 2023

In the 14th century, Chaucer wrote both *The Canterbury Tales* and a treatise on the astrolabe. There are innumerable such examples, not least that of Lewis Carroll, who, of course, was a mathematician first and an author second.

Sarah Hart, "The Hidden Connections Between Math and Literature," The New York Times, April 9, 2023

Some novelists make maths the theme of their work. Lewis Carroll, a lecturer at Oxford University, combined fantastical escapades with references to puzzles, sums, and numerical games in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Alice uses a "proof

by contradiction" to expose the Mock Turtle's lies about studying arithmetic.

From a review of Sarah Hart's Once Upon a Prime in The Economist, April 15, 2023

The old diva's face is her art historical fortune. She is the infamous Ugly Duchess, so christened after John Tenniel used her as the basis for his illustration of the Duchess in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. (Tenniel in fact normalized her face, transferring the ellipse that swoops down from her nose like a bull ring to her screaming baby's open mouth.)

James Hall, "Renaissance Gender Benders," in The Times Literary Supplement, May 19, 2023

Disney himself had never been totally comfortable with Alice's story (though not so uncomfortable that he didn't replace Lewis Carroll's name with his own in the movie's opening credits: Walt Disney's Alice in Wonderland).

Rupert Holmes, Where the Truth Lies, Random House, New York, 2003. Actually, the opening title cards famously read:

WALT DISNEY PRESENTS
ALICE IN WONDERLAND,
AN ADAPTATION OF LEWIS
CARROLL'S [sic] ALICE'S
ADVENTURES IN WONDER-
LAND AND THROUGH THE
LOOKING-GLASS.

As Carroll wrote, "I nearly forgot. You must close your eyes, or you won't see anything."

Lauren Laverne, Foreword to What Would Alice Do?, Macmillan's Children's Books [!], 2015



Disappointed to discover that "Jabberwocky" was not included in this seemingly "abridged" publication by Castle Books in 1978.

Shirley Gruenhut, Amazon product review of The Original Illustrated Alice in Wonderland (Castle Books, 1978), October 13, 2017

Reading lives of both Charles [I] and Cromwell, one can only recall Alice's sound verdict on the Walrus and the Carpenter: that they were both very unpleasant characters.

Adam Gopnik, reviewing Jonathan Healy's The Blazing World, Knopf, 2023, in The New Yorker, April 24 & May 1, 2023

The British press now converted the book into their native tongue, that Jabberwocky of bonkers hot takes and classist snark.

J.R. Moehringer, "The Ghost-writer," The New Yorker, May 15, 2023

He sauntered out of the station, leaving his chortling laugh behind like an echo. The Cheshire Cat came to the desk sergeant's mind. He had read *Alice in Wonderland* to his daughter, a long time ago. He had no idea why it was popular. It was complete nonsense.

Kate Atkinson, Shrines of Gaiety, Doubleday, 2022

In Lewis Carroll's 1876 nonsense poem "The Hunting of the Snark," a crew of adventurers, including a baker, a barrister, and a beaver, seek to ensnare an elusive fictional beast called a Boojum—a being so hideous in appearance that to merely lay eyes on it will cause a person to "softly and suddenly vanish away."

Eviana Hartman, "Why Are We Living with Such Ugly Succulents and Cactuses," T: The New York Times Style Magazine, Feb. 15, 2023

Ravings from the WRITING Desk

OF ARNOLD HIRSHON

First, all who run in this race must have prizes. This is my first “Ravings” column since I became president, so I must first express my appreciation to the incredible members of our Board for their continued devotion to advancing the Society. In particular, our immediate past-president, Linda Cassady, has been an invaluable mentor. Her exemplary leadership was an inspiration, and she has already provided me with invaluable advice as I eased into this role. I am thrilled that Linda agreed to continue to serve us in the critical role of treasurer.

A very special thanks as well to our inventive and enthusiastic new vice president, Heather Simmons. Of course, many of you appreciate Heather as the organizer of our monthly Zoom programs, but she also provides outstanding services behind the scenes. A tip of the Hatter’s hat to her for our extraordinarily successful virtual *Lights! Camera! Carroll! Conference* in April. I add my thanks for the contributions of our many filmmakers and presenters, and to you, the 162 viewers from different countries who attended.

I am also extremely grateful for the continued contribution and advice of our other members of the Board, including our secretary, Sandra Lee Parker, and the directors-at-large: Edward Guiliano, April James, Amy Plummer, Alan Tannenbaum, and our newest member, Diane Waggoner. All of them bring great ideas and insights, and they all serve more-than-double duty serving on committees or performing other tasks.

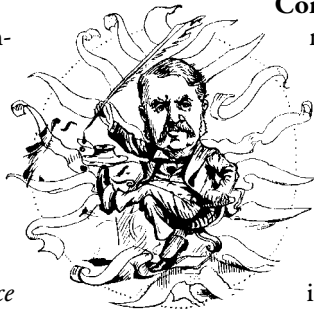
Many thanks also to all of the members of our committees, including the Publications Committee, the *Knight Letter* crew (and their intrepid leader, Mark Burstein), the Finance Committee, and the virtual events advisory team under the able direction of Heather Simmons.

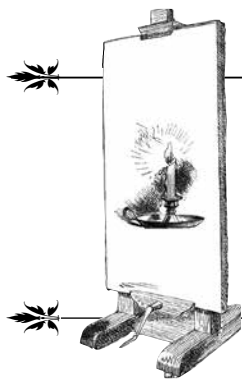
Our own inventions. This year the Board approved a working document to provide you with an ambitious list of our organizational “Initiatives and Priorities.” It is available on our website, and we will continuously update it to acknowledge our successes as we complete our tasks and add new ones to the list. Please send me any questions you may have, and I welcome your ideas for enriching your experiences as members.

There is plenty of room at the table. A key objective for 2023 is to encourage members to get *involved* in the work of the Society. As a first step, we recently added to the website a description of all of our committees. If you are not yet active in the LCSNA, do know how important volunteer efforts are to sustaining us. Please review the list of committees to see if one sparks your personal interests, and, if so, contact me to let me know how you would like to participate.

Come and join the dance! I am happy to announce that the Fall 2023 Conference will be held in-person from Friday, September 29, through Sunday, October 1, in Cleveland, Ohio, on the campus of Case Western Reserve University. Speakers will include Kenneth Gross, author of *Dangerous Children*, which examines Alice within the context of strange and dangerous children in literature; Laura White, author of *The Alice Books and the Contested Ground of the Natural World*; new Wonderland illustrator Sean Dietrich; Daniel Goldmark on popular songs inspired by Carroll’s works; Amanda Kennell on her new book, *Alice in Japanese Wonderlands: Translation, Adaptation, Mediation*; Gladisa Guadalupe of the Cleveland Ballet on their new ballet, *Alice*; and USC’s Jim Kincaid, author of *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* in conversation with Edward Guiliano. Information about their presentations, and a guide to Cleveland and environs, are continually updated on our website. Given the costs and challenges of managing hybrid meetings, this one is likely to be in-person only, with recordings of the presentations available at a later time.

Feel free to contact me with all of your questions, suggestions, and concerns.





ILLUSTRATOR SPOTLIGHT

KSENIA LAVROVA

MARK BURSTEIN



There are few collectors of Carroll who are not enamored of the editions containing Ksenia Lavrova (Ксения Лаврова)'s spectacular, densely packed, exhilarating, jewel-toned, over-the-top, and truly unique illustrations. Her books are usually cited as among their very favorites; I count myself among them.

Lavrova's style in all her works is instantly recognizable through three signature aspects: love of nature, as her worlds teem with a richly diverse myriad of insects and animals; a preponderance of intricate details in every illustration, especially of textures and fabrics; and the use of elaborate costumes and wigs from various eras as a means to power the narrative.

In her own words:

The White Rabbit is dressed as Louis XV, the French clothing of the time of Choderlos de Laclos's *Les Liaisons dangereuses*. The gilet-vest is embroidered with French satin stitch, a specific type of embroidery. The main thing here is the red high heels, which dominated the fashion of the day. The Knave of Hearts is the prototype of the English dandy Beau Brummell: yellow pantaloons, an avant-garde cravat, a cane, patent leather shoes, a fashionable hairstyle from the "Incroyables" period.

The Queen of Hearts is Elizabeth I. The King is Louis XVI, soft, fat, weak-willed, under the heel of his wife. I dressed the queen in a Victorian dress. I deliberately made it red. She is an aggressive character in the book. A psychopathic personality: she runs, yells at everyone, cuts off everyone's heads. And I added little stupid bows to add irony to each character.

Lavrova (her name means "laurel tree") was born in Leningrad in 1967. After a childhood obsessed with zoology and insects, many of which appear in her drawings, she graduated from the Stieglitz State Academy of Art and Design (СПИХИЛ) in 1990 with a degree in Fabric Design. She began to actively engage in art exhibitions, while at the same time fulfilling commissions from fashion designers for hand-painted fabrics in the "cold batik" style, and soon received her first order for book illustration, for *St. Petersburg in Russian*

Literature (Санкт-Петербург в русской литературе, Образование, 1992).

Her next commission came in 1995 from the collector and art editor Sergey Chistobaev, who asked her to illustrate *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass*, a task which eventually comprised 150 full-color 10 × 12-inch (26 × 30 cm) illustrations. The work took her two-and-a-half years, although she—and the world—had to wait an additional sixteen years until the books saw print! Chistobaev had decided that the late '90s was not the time for bringing out such beautiful yet iconoclastic books in Russia. He later founded the publishing house Rech (Речь). In 2013 a small, limited run of the duo—*Приключения Алисы в Стране чудес* and *Сквозь зеркало и что там увидела Алиса, или Алиса в Зазеркалье*—was printed for an exhibition in St. Petersburg; trade editions came out six years after that!

In 1997, being seriously carried away by oriental culture (in particular, China), Lavrova entered the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, whose "educated and enthusiastic orientalist left a deep mark on my creative biography." Taking time out for the birth of a daughter, she graduated in 2005. She continued to actively participate in projects, such as decorating private apartments and houses with her graphics, and art exhibitions in Russia, Canada, Estonia, Finland, Italy, France, and China.

The following interview was conducted in Russian over Instagram and email.

KNIGHT LETTER: Do you aim your Carroll images at children, adults, both, or somewhere in between?

КСЕНИЯ ЛАВРОВА: Actually, I did illustrations for adults or teenagers. Definitely not for little ones. For *Alice in Wonderland*, I specifically studied the history of world costume. The history of costume is not interesting for children, but the adult audience might appreciate the meticulousness of the research I put into it.

KL: Can you tell us a little about your process? How did you decide which scenes to portray?

КА: I love and study the history of costumes around the world. It is necessary for me to dress up all the char-



acters in the book in beautiful, bright, interesting costumes! Since I studied textile and fabric design, I also know the ornaments and accessories of different countries well, which was very useful to me.

Of course, I chose to portray the scenes where I saw how the character could be presented in the most adventurous way. *Alice in Wonderland* is a real theater! There you can build and make scenography on each page!

I was lucky with my publisher, who is an educated person with good taste and sense of proportion. He understood that it was impossible to interfere in my creative process, so he let me do what I want! This is a great success for any artist, as “work for hire” is usually accompanied by some censorship, there are wishes of the customer and so on. It’s great that no one controlled me: I was not asked to do or not do anything specific. I had autonomy.

KZ: What did you like most about illustrating Carroll’s books? What was the most fun for you? or interesting for you?

KA: The most interesting thing is to dress the characters in costumes from different countries and eras. My Alice has different images, different outfits (she is even a geisha in one of the chapters). I also love to portray an abundance of insects crawling everywhere. This reminds the reader how diverse and beautiful our world is, from a small caterpillar or an emerald chameleon to a large wrinkled gray elephant.

KZ: Was it frustrating for you to wait so long before the books saw print?

KA: I decided not to grieve, and just switched to other creative activities. I was engaged in easel graphics, graphics for interior spaces, mastering painting walls and architectural objects, painting porcelain.

KZ: Who influenced you? Or is a favorite artist?

KA: Aubrey Beardsley of course! I can look at his illustrations endlessly. But the main thing is *not* to imitate! I studied engravings by Albrecht Dürer a lot. I really like his precise dry style, with “crunchy folds of clothes.” Also the botanical series of books by M. S. [Maria Sibylla] Merian [1647–1717]. The life story of this brave woman amazed me as well.

KZ: What drew you to illustrate the *Alice* books?

KA: I was attracted by the fact that the author came up with his own world, separate, fascinating, like a portal to another realm. You go down the rabbit hole—and you’re already in another dimension. And there you can do whatever you want! You can disobey the rules, you can dress the characters however you please, you can build castles with the wrong perspective, and so on!

Is it noticeable that I’m somewhat “obsessed” with clothes? Yes! I wanted to be a fashion designer. But I didn’t know how to sew, so I got scared. I was sure that they would not accept me precisely because of the lack of this sewing skill . . . well, maybe I should have tried!

KZ: Did you use any model for Alice or for the other characters?

KA: I immediately decided that my Alice would *not* be the same as other illustrators’. I think that many artists set just such a goal: not to repeat the



usual childhood photographs of Alice Liddell or Tenniel's girl in a pinafore from the era of Queen Victoria!

My Alice is different on every page. I portrayed her as a different person, with different outfits. In *Looking-Glass*, I even portrayed her as Marlene Dietrich in one! Dressing my heroines in beautiful, silk-embroidered clothes, I want to make the viewer not only think, but also read a specific literary work, such as *A Dream of the Red Chamber* [1791] or *The Plum in the Golden Vase* [c. 1610].

KZ: What about your technique? Do you use water-color, acrylic, gouache, oil . . . ?

KA: All my illustrations are entirely hand-drawn in pen and ink. I use only acrylic, ink, pen, paper. In the '90s I did a lot of batik-hand-painted silk, which was a rather harmful process that caused me health problems. Since then, I have been trying to choose safe techniques. Although lately I have been painting porcelain professionally.

KZ: The *Alice* books are worlds of paradoxes and dreams. How do you convey this?

KA: My characters, including Alice, all look different whenever they appear. This lack of "continuity" gives the flavor of a dream or paradox.

KZ: What are some of your current and future projects?

KA: After my two *Alice* books, I illustrated Oscar Wilde's *Fairy Tales* (*Сказки*) and *The Picture of*

Dorian Gray. Now negotiations are underway on my illustrating Japanese prose by women writers of the Heian period [9th–12th centuries CE].

My education never stops. I have always understood that the East (China in particular) cannot be comprehended without studying all aspects: language, literature, poetry, painting, history, and geography. I study fashion, everyday life and customs, and, mainly, ornaments not only in China, but also in Japan, Africa, and the Arab countries.

Since 2019, I have been participating in the project "Petersburg Artists" at the Imperial Porcelain (Manu)Factory (IPM). The theme of the East, the poetry of Japan in particular, is reflected in each of my hand-painted products.



In an article for the online *Russian Art and Paris Journal* (January 6, 2013), Marina Chekmareva, a PhD in Art History, said Lavrova's

quirky, whimsical, elastic line is as if borrowed from Persian miniature painters. Luxury materials and textures depicted in her works send the viewer to the aesthetics of art deco. The mood of a light sadness, smooth flowing silhouettes, the bright combination of gold with purple, lilac hues, the quiet showing of reflections and iridescence, complemented by decorative flatness are reminiscent of art nouveau. The information density of her artworks is unusually high. It is impossible to catch at first glance all of the characters and innumerable details. Each time you always discover something new.

Lavrova herself has this to say:

The history of costume and fashion is the most truthful mirror of human nature and the visual environment. A careful study of the history of the creation of fabrics, stages of formation of the historic appearance of "a dressed-up person" at different times in different countries, as well as the understanding and study of ethnic groups in different countries, helps me create real and live artistic images. It would be better to say that I am creating a visual encyclopedia of human images of bygone eras—images of the whimsical, strange, and not always beautiful.

Well, this writer would take issue with that last phrase. Her work simply pulses with beauty.

In Memoriam



Don Rackin, 89, longtime professor of English at Temple University, longtime member of our Society, and Carroll scholar extraordinaire, died at home of Parkinson's disease on November 23, 2022.

In the history of Carroll studies, there have been perhaps a dozen people whose work made a profound contribution to what we know about Carroll and his works and influenced the respected position Carroll holds today in learned communities. Most of those people were biographers, editors of Carroll's works and letters, annotators, and cataloguers of his works and possessions, but Rackin was different: He was a literary critic of the first rank. He analyzed Carroll's works in ways that had not been done before and forever changed what educated adults bring to and take away from those works. Moreover, more than anyone, he established Carroll as an author who deserved a distinguished place inside the Academy.

Remembered as someone who always had a kind and helpful word for everyone, Rackin was a mentor to generations of students and professors. Many Carrollians will remember his elfish, cherubic self, smiling and laughing and upbeat at the many LCSNA general and board meetings he attended.

Everyone noticed his keen intelligence. Many experienced his determined advocacy, especially for faculty matters, but also as an activist fighting against hunger . . . and war. He was a bit of a union organizer, heavily involved in leadership roles in the faculty union at Temple, and eventually became the editor of the Association of University Professors' *Academe*, the association's national "trade" magazine.

For Carrollians, his essays live on. Before Rackin, Carroll and his *Alices* were rarely present in university classrooms and did not have a place on required reading lists. His essay "Alice's Journey to the End of Night" changed all that and is arguably the most important publication about

Donald Rackin

February 23, 1933 — November 23, 2022

Remembered by Edward Guiliano



Carroll's work after *The Annotated Alice*. The year was 1966. Rackin's essay appeared in the October 1966 issue of the peer-edited Journal of the Modern Language Association, *PMLA*, then and (mostly) now, the most prestigious and respected literary journal in the world. Via Rackin, Carroll had arrived at the Academy with a bang not a whimper.

To be fair and balanced, let's recognize that the university world

was changing in the mid-1960s, rapidly expanding and open to the new ideas of the late '60s and early '70s and to an entirely new generation of undergraduate minds, some later to become professors. In 1966, there were other Carroll publications by rising scholars such as Donald Gray and Robert Martin, and older essays of merit were being reprinted, those by William Empson and Virginia Woolf, for example. Also in 1966, the eminent psychoanalyst Phyllis Greenacre wrote about Carroll's nonsense and its relationship to aggression and anxiety.

But in 1967, Rackin's essay won the MLA's William Riley Parker Prize for the best essay published in *PMLA* in the previous year. That recognition changed everything: It was the profession's stamp of approval on Carroll being in classrooms and on reading lists and on publication lists submitted by professors seeking tenure.

In the essay, Rackin offered a critical reading of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as "a self-contained fiction, distinct from *Through the Looking-Glass* and all the other imaginative pieces by Carroll. . . . Alice's dogged quest for Wonderland's meaning in terms of her aboveground world is doomed to failure. Her only escape is in flight from Wonderland's complete anarchy . . . [and] is a symbolic rejection of mad sanity in favor of the sane madness of ordinary existence. . . . Her literal quest serves, vicariously, as the reader's metaphorical search for meaning in the lawless haphazard universe of his deepest consciousness. . . . The book is paradoxically both a denial and an affirmation of order."

Rackin lent his name, reputation, and brilliance to the barely established Lewis Carroll Society of North America by contributing an essay titled “Laughing and Grief: What’s So Funny About *Alice in Wonderland*?” to *Lewis Carroll Observed* (1976), the Society’s first book undertaking. His presence helped give the Society early respect and credibility, which in turn helped to attract other scholars and contributors as well as members. His answer to the question he posed in the essay was that *Alice*’s complex humor depends heavily on much that cannot be called “funny,” that might called “horrifying.” He also contributed “Blessed Rage: Lewis Carroll and the Modern Quest for Order” to *Lewis Carroll: A Celebration* (1982), and also that year, “Love and Death in Carroll’s *Alices*” to *Soaring with the Dodo*, another LCSNA publication.

He repackaged some of the earlier essays with some additional new ideas in a comprehensive book, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass: Nonsense, Sense, and Meaning* (1991). Much earlier, in 1969, he edited an edition of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* that, in addition to the texts of *Alice* and *Under Ground*, contained reprints of what we now might call vintage studies about Carroll. Both books contain versions of his celebrated “Alice’s Journey to the End of Night.” It remains obligatory reading in the Academy and is the most reprinted of

Carroll studies. Professor Rackin also spoke on four occasions at LCSNA meetings (1978, 1988, 1994, 1998).

He was born in Newark, New Jersey, and graduated from Rutgers University (BA), Columbia U. (MA), and the University of Illinois (PhD). He lived in the Philadelphia area for nearly sixty years and loved his summer home on Prince Edward Island, Canada, where he sailed and fished, and cooked and fixed things around the house . . . and no doubt laughed a lot. He leaves behind a laugh that still resounds in many people’s ears.

He also leaves behind his wife of sixty-eight years, Phyllis, a retired professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, and their two daughters and a grandson. More broadly, he leaves behind an enhanced appreciation in the world for the works of Lewis Carroll. Thank you.

As a professor of Victorian Literature, apart from Carroll, Don’s favorite author was the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, and he especially loved the sonnet “God’s Grandeur.” This celebratory poem affirms nature as renewing the world with its eternal “freshness” and points to a future that transcends the burdens of humanity, paralleling the spirit and the upbeat and profound character and humanity of Donald Rackin.

It ends with the line: “World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.”

R.I.P.



Although he was not well known to members of the LCSNA, we need to

record the recent death of Kenn Outram at the age of 87 on March 9. In 1970, he co-founded the Daresbury Lewis Carroll Society, and until about 2003 he wrote their newsletter—which was all rather idiosyncratic and full of any other facts about famous Cheshire folk that appealed to him.

For many years, he was virtually the sole organizer of meetings of the Society, and attracted a number of well-known speakers. The concept of Cheshire Cats appealed to him, and he wrote articles discussing their origin and organized com-

Kenn Outram

1936 — 2023

Remembered by Selwyn Goodacre

petitions for Cat lovers, as well as devising a Cheshire Cat literary trail.

One of his proudest discoveries was that Harry Theaker was the person who created the colored versions of Tenniel’s pictures for the 1911 Macmillan combined edition of the *Alice* books.

For some years, he and I were on a committee that hoped to establish a Lewis Carroll Centre in Daresbury. Sadly, this never came to fruition, though in recent years the Church has created and built a fine annex in honor of Lewis Carroll.

He was my longest-lasting Carrollian friend, and I shall miss him.



ALICE IN ADVERTISING-LAND

DAYNA NUHN LOZINSKI



This column features two Canadian advertisements, each promoting quite different products.

From 1935 to 1945, Canada had a Victory Bonds program to help pay for the costs of two world wars. It was replaced, from 1946 to 2017, with Canada Savings Bonds, which included a payroll savings plan.

Over 71 years, Canada Savings Bonds' advertising campaigns were usually as dry as the mouse's tale. They mostly fell into two categories: future-focused (save for tomorrow) or patriotic (invest in Canada). In an uncharacteristic move, Wonderland was chosen as the whimsical theme to promote the 1988 bond issue. There isn't an obvious connection between the insanity that is Wonderland ("we're all mad here") and conservatively investing your money in bonds. However, by using Tenniel's iconic illustrations as the inspiration for the artwork, combined with imaginative copy that was linked to the story, the advertising successfully tapped into the enduring recognizability and popularity of the *Alice* books (and made investing that year more fun than usual):

"You'd be mad as a Hatter not to re-invest by November 1"

"Like Alice your bonds keep growing"

"Owners of 1981 bonds can grin from ear to ear"

"Don't be late! You've got to buy and re-invest by an earlier date"

In addition to the print advertisements, there was a tri-fold information pamphlet available at banks, a promotional pin-back button, and a fun 15-second commercial ([youtube.com/watch?v=BeOIbFCw6NI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeOIbFCw6NI)).

Alice in Wonderland paired with Canada Savings Bonds truly is "the one investment story everyone likes."

You could then spend the interest you earned with your wise investment in Canada Saving Bonds on a relaxing, warm, and sunny vacation.

A playful 1993 advertisement for Club Med resorts, the pioneers of all-inclusive vacations, is unusual because the copy doesn't mention "Alice" or "Wonderland." There is a tenuous connection with the tagline "If only the real world were this real," but the ad relies completely on the consumer recognizing the characters in the illustration as being from the *Alice* books.

We see Alice, dressed in her "real world" outfit, falling from the sky through the leaves of a palm tree, entering this sun-drenched vacation Wonderland. It is obvious that the other characters have been having fun holidaying for a while. All the advantages of choosing a Club Med resort vacation are shown by the various characters: The Tweedles are about to go swimming; the Hatter is on his way to some kind of tropical iced tea party; one Card Gardener is ready for tennis; and the White Rabbit, who has traded his waistcoat for a Hawaiian shirt, is late for his "tee" party. Even the Cheshire Cat and Dormouse are wearing bathing suits.

This creative advertisement uses one large image in bright, eye-catching colors, providing an exotic contrast to Tenniel's original black-and-white illustrations. It dramatically highlights the difference between this dream vacationland and the boring real world. The company's choice of Alice and the other Wonderland characters strongly emphasizes the fantasy aspect of a visit to a Club Med resort. If dreams are what you are selling, then Alice is your girl.

Another world really does await, and, after several years of not traveling, I am ready to pack my suitcase and soak up some sunshine. "Hands up" if you're with me!

Canada Savings Bonds. The one investment story everyone likes.



Like Alice: Your bonds keep growing. Compound interest means you earn interest on the interest you've earned. So your money grows faster and faster. It's like magic!

Easy to buy: You can buy your new Canada Savings Bonds whenever you want. No need to wait for a special date. Just go to your bank or call 1-800-367-6033.

Beat the rush: Millions of Canadians will be buying Canada Savings Bonds this fall. You can avoid last minute line-ups by acting as soon as the new bonds go on sale.

Special arrangements for re-investing: Starting October 20 special arrangements make it easy to re-invest maturing 1981 Canada Savings Bonds (Series 36) and annual interest received from all Canada Savings Bonds issues. See reverse for complete details.

As flexible as ever: This year's series retain the great features that have made Canada Savings Bonds the favourite investment for millions of Canadians over the past 42 years. You can rely on Canada Savings Bonds year after year.

Safe and secure: Canada Savings Bonds are fully guaranteed by the Government of Canada. They're a safe, secure investment that never falls in value.

Cashable anytime: Canada Savings Bonds can be cashed at any time. If you cash the new bonds before February 1, 1989, you will receive the full face value. If cashed after that, you will receive the full face value plus all the interest earned since November 1, 1988.

Easy to buy: You may buy your new Canada Savings Bonds wherever you bank or invest. Many employers also offer their employees the opportunity to buy Canada Savings Bonds at work through the Payroll Savings Plan - ask for details where you work.

Two types of bonds: Choose Compound Interest Bonds which re-invest your interest automatically, so your savings continue to grow until the bonds are cashed or reach maturity. Or choose Regular Interest Bonds which pay interest each November 1 until maturity, either by cheque or by direct deposit to your account. Denominations start as low as \$100 for Compound Interest Bonds and \$500 for Regular Interest Bonds.

Interest rate announced mid-October: The interest rate and purchase limit for the new series will be announced in mid-October. At the same time, the interest rates for the coming year on outstanding Series 37 to 42 Canada Savings Bonds will be announced. Details will be available in daily newspapers and wherever Canada Savings Bonds are sold.

Don't be late! Plan to buy your new Canada Savings Bonds starting October 20. Remember, November 1 is the last day you can buy the new bonds at face value. But the Minister of Finance may withdraw the bonds from sale at any time.

Canada Savings Bonds. A very timely investment.

Canada Savings Bonds

If you own the 1981 Canada Savings Bonds (Series 36), you can grin from ear to ear.



Re-invest from Oct. 20 to Nov. 1

But you'd be mad as a Hatter not to re-invest by November 1.



Series 36 matures this year: If you are one of the 1.5 million Canadians who own 1981 Canada Savings Bonds (Series 36), you made a great investment. But these bonds mature on November 1, so plan to re-invest in the new series now.

You must act early: This year, the Canada Savings Bond sales period is earlier - from Thursday, October 20 to Thursday, November 1. To re-invest in the new bonds you'll have to act by November 1. After that, it'll be too late.

Special arrangements make it easy to re-invest: From October 20 to November 1, special arrangements make it easy to re-invest in new Canada Savings Bonds. Simply present your maturing Series 36 bonds to your bank or other authorized sales agent.

All the paperwork for the redemption of your maturing bonds and the purchase of your new bonds will be done for you at that time. The transfer of funds will take place automatically on November 1, the day your Series 36 bonds mature and your new bonds start earning interest. So your money keeps on working for you without interruption.

These special arrangements also apply for the early re-investment of annual interest received from all Canada Savings Bonds issues.

How to identify maturing bonds: To identify your maturing Series 36 Canada Savings Bonds look for "CS36" or "BS36" in front of the serial number at the top of the bond certificate.

Note also that Series 1 to 35 have already matured and no longer earn interest. Check today for the series number and maturity date printed on your bond certificate.

Value of maturing bonds: The value of your Series 36 bonds at maturity on November 1 will depend on the type of bonds you own.

Regular Interest Bonds: Upon redemption, holders of Regular Interest Bonds (RS36) will receive the face value of their bonds. Holders will also receive a final interest payment of \$205.00 per \$1,000 bond by cheque or direct deposit.

Compound Interest Bonds: Upon redemption, holders of Compound Interest Bonds (CS36) will receive the face value of their bonds plus all accumulated interest since the bonds were issued in 1981. The interest each year has been automatically re-invested, earning interest on interest. Each \$1,000 Compound Interest Bond will be worth a total of \$2,225.00.

Avoid the rush! More than 1.5 million Canadians own bonds maturing this fall. To beat the line-up, re-invest starting October 20. Don't forget - after November 1 it'll be too late!

Asset: dependable on finance

Don't be late! Canada Savings Bonds have an earlier date.



Campaign Period Oct. 20 to Nov. 1

Don't be late! Canada Savings Bonds

Oct. 20 to Nov. 1

Canada Savings Bonds

ANOTHER WORLD AWAITS



A World of Dreams. A World of Dreamers.
Your Club Med vacation provides return action, village accommodation, gourmet meals a day with unlimited wine and beer at lunch and dinner, a complete sports program with all the equipment and professional instruction, a diverse range of nightly entertainment including cabaret, shows and discos.

For more information or reservations call your travel agent or Club Med. In Quebec, call 1-800-363-6033. Elsewhere in Canada, call 1-800-268-1160.

club Med

"IF ONLY THE REAL WORLD WERE THIS REAL"

Don't be late! Canada Savings Bonds



Oct. 20 to Nov. 1

Canada Savings Bonds

ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN
CLUEDUPPLAND

Jim Guida

*"It takes all the running you can do,
to keep in the same place. If you want
to get somewhere else, you must run
at least twice as fast as that!"*

Fortunately, for players of Clued-
Upp's ALICE IN WONDERLAND
SACRAMENTO (I guess you need to
add your own "Adventures in"), time
is not of the essence, as you seek out
Alice, who has been kidnapped by
the Queen and put in a dungeon.

CluedUpp sponsors "interactive
outdoor adventures" where you and
your team gather at a central spot—
in this case downtown Sacramento
and the Cesar Chavez Plaza—to
read the clues provided by the
downloaded app and rescue Alice
before the Queen shouts "Off with
her head!"

The journey is well done and was
a lot of fun for my family, including
my four-year-old grandson. Bring
a stroller if you are including little
ones, as there is a lot of walking,
even in the limited space of the
game. We never ventured more than
two blocks from our starting point.

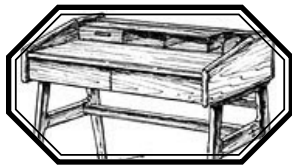
Before you begin, your Team
Leader will choose a team name.
Trust me, someone already chose
"The Mad Hatters," and since I
woke my daughter up to ask her
opinion as to our name, we went
with "The Dormice." She later of-
fered "The Angry Chapeaus," but it
was too late.

The game starts in the morning,
with an online introduction by the
White Rabbit, but you do not need
to be there at the crack of dawn. You
can join the fun any time up until
the finish; in this case, the game ran
from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., but it
took us only about two hours to fin-
ish the game and save Alice. Huzzah!

While the game can be estab-
lished anywhere—a park, an arena,
or downtown—don't be so focused
on your phone that you forget to
look up to see where you are going.
(That's good general advice as well.)



Carrollian Notes



There is no "Disneyfication" of
the story, and many of the charac-
ters from both books are there: the
White Rabbit, the White Knight,
the Queen, Tweedles Dee and Dum,
and numerous others are all part of
the game. You do not need special
knowledge of Alice to play, so be
sure to invite your less enlightened
friends. You may want to take notes
for some of the puzzles, but one
sheet and a pen should be enough.

The cost is the same—\$80 (but
50% discounts are readily offered)—
whether you are alone or a team of
six. And if you add more people, no
one is keeping track. Keep in mind
that everyone who logs in on their
cell phone will be required to partic-
ipate in the various activities, such



Team Members

as shaking the pepper pot, blowing
into the phone to stoke the fire, and
solving "put together" puzzles. As
a consequence, you may only want
a few folks to check in. And if you
are the leader, be willing to give your
phone to your daughter, who gets
frustrated easily and will take over
the leadership role anyhow.

A visit to their website, www.CluedUpp.com, should find a game
near to where you live. Have fun and
don't worry what others will think.
After all, "we're all mad here!"



WONDERLAND DREAMS

ARE MADE OF THIS

Griffin Miller

I've been lured into works by van
Gogh, Monet, and Klimt pro-
jected onto walls, floors, pillars,
and people. I've climbed barely lit
stairways in the McKittrick Hotel
taking me to the rooms, corridors,
shops, and pop-up scenes that
define the Macbethian riff Sleep No
More. I've even been coerced into a
few mystery weekends and an escape
room or two. Yet it was Wonder-
land Dreams, a 26,000-square-foot
art installation in my Manhattan
stamping grounds, which upped the
immersive ante with its hands-on,
dress-up, unleash-your-inner-Alice
experience.

The brainchild of D.C.-born art-
ist Alexa Meade, known for turning
three-dimensional human faces and
bodies into two-dimensional paint-
ings, Wonderland Dreams honors
the 3-D technique in a far larger,
backdrop-driven sense. Rather than
being the canvas, you occupy it. You
become Alice, popping your head or
leg through the window of a minia-
ture house, or the Hatter overseeing
a pigment-infused tea-party laid out
in staggering detail. Said Meade,
"I couldn't be more thrilled that
everyone who walks into the exhibit
brings the space alive and becomes
part of the art."

During a labor-intense time
frame spanning roughly two
months, Meade and twenty (more

or less) assistants took on a floor-to-ceiling transformation—the space was formerly a Best Buy—that didn’t stop at clouds, rosebushes, and keyholes. Furniture (undersides included), props (from tiny macaroons to mega-mushrooms), and cosplay pieces (helmets, caps, crowns, jackets, aprons, glasses, you name it) were meticulously brush-stroked to fulfill Meade’s fantastical vision. In fact, pretty much everything you see, touch, and wear in *Wonderland Dreams* has been painted and sealed with varnish—at this point more than once, as touchups are scheduled regularly to accommodate the show’s tacit “no restrictions on how much or how hard you can frolic” policy.

“Over the years I’ve worked on many projects that transform people and environments into immersive works of art, but *Wonderland Dreams* is by far my most massive project to date,” said Meade, whose intro to Alice was most likely through the animated 1951 Disney film that enchanted her as a child. But if she missed reading *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass* as kid, she made up for the lapse by reading and re-reading the books while putting together the exhibit, stating in a *Forbes* interview last October, “The text is so rich, and while it is written with a child audience in mind, it is absolutely spellbinding and captivating for any grown-up, much less or even more so for an artist.”

Meade’s mashup of the two Alice books—*Wonderland* being the dominant source—is sometimes literal, with oversized playing cards and pocket watches, and life-size flamingoes, and sometimes conceptual, like a convoy of toddler sportscars and a jaw-dropping black-and-white sector—laced with red rose petals—that undulates into a chessboard of primary colors for a first-rate optical illusion.

Overall, *Wonderland Dreams*’ thirty+ rooms and passageways unfold randomly, so turning a corner or entering a new space means

a spike of discovery. And I have to say, carving my own surreal path, through styles ranging from impressionism and pop art to the abstract and psychedelic, was awesome; sensory overload be damned. If Alice could drift from one bizarre encounter to the next, surrendering to happenstance, I could curl up in a giant comfy chair, model a pair of bunny ears, do-si-do with jumbo chess pieces, and join a six-year-old for a spin (literally). And even though I couldn’t change sizes, I could absolutely change from an enormous striped floppy hat into a stunning Escher-esque ensemble . . . and capture all of the above on my cell phone. Abandon all inhibitions, ye who enter here—and by all means leave behind a personal message or quip on a Post-It (provided).



Originally set to run from October through December, 2022, *Wonderland Dreams* has been extended a few times, the latest reprieve taking it through December 2023. I expect I’ll return a few times between now and then. My intro to Meade’s sweeping *Wonderland* visuals and tactile objets d’Alice was seductive . . . and after checking out some of her other projects online, I’ve become a bit of a fan. Still, it’s her her-

culean New York masterpiece that drew me in, in the first place, and about which she had this to say:

Through my work on *Wonderland Dreams*, I wanted to bring Alice’s experience into the human realm by creating a place where adults and children alike can wander into a whimsical world—and dream.

Beyond Immersion

Should you live in, or venture to, the Big Apple between now and New Year’s and wish to take the *Wonderland Dreams* plunge, it’s helpful to know:

While the *Wonderland* excursion is the main attraction, you can also (a) visit a Living Gallery where you become a work of art inside a picture frame, (b) tap into your inner Picasso in a painting workshop, and (c) if you’re 21+, on weekends from five to nine, indulge/imbibe/party with the cool kids in “*Wonderland After Dark*,” where you can selfie your way through the immersive expo, toss back a glass of wine or beer, and take home a painted memento of your own creation.

The venue (closed on Tuesdays) is a short jaunt from NYC’s Grand Central Station at 529 Fifth Avenue (between 44th & 45th Streets).

Reservations are recommended (wonderlanddreams.com), and I suggest giving yourself plenty of time, as the labyrinthine layout—plus distractions like photo ops—make it more marathon than sprint.

And, naturally, there is merch to be had at “The *Wonderland* Gift Show,” where painted clothes, playing cards, umbrellas, and one-of-a-kind 3D painted art objects by Alexa Meade, are all up for grabs.

Joining me for *Wonderland Dreams* was LCSNA veteran Cindy Watter, who kindly endured my ADD shenanigans, wanderlust, and need to interview the staff, although truth be told, she was the conversational star of the day, chatting up several parents and kids,

including one exchange in French. Here's her commentary on our adventure:

The place was thoroughly child-proofed, with soft corners and/or surfaces. The children were playing with the miniature vehicles, in the tiny houses, and with the stuffed toys. There were neither motors nor electronics to be seen, hooray. While the purist in me would have liked to see an actual *Alice* book in the store, Wonderland Dreams is stimulating and creative, and I am sure will inspire its patrons to pick up [an *Alice*] book.

Meanwhile, a few weeks earlier, Dayna Nuhn Lozinski and her husband Michael not only visited Wonderland Dreams, but met the artist. Unfortunately, the encounter was fleeting (no quotes to be had), as the artist had to leave shortly after letting them in the building.

It was so much fun to see all the visitors enjoying each room, playing, dressing up, exploring, interacting, and just being enchanted by everything around them. Like thousands of other visitors, I left behind a sticky note on the wall; mine read, "Thank you, Alexa, for making all my Wonderland dreams come true!"

NELLO SPECCHIO DI ALICE:

IL SÉ E L'ALTRO

Stefania Tondo

Every year at Christmastime, *Il Natale delle meraviglie* (A Christmas of Wonders), a one-day international conference, takes place at Suor Orsola Benincasa University in Naples, where I am an associate professor of English Literature. Talks are in Italian or English.

It all started in 2014 with the support of Professors Laura Tosi (Ca' Foscari University, Venice), Peter Hunt (Cardiff University,

UK), Elena Paruolo (University of Salerno), the academic staff of the university—Professors Fabrizio Manuel Sirignano, Enrico Maria Corbi, and Lucio D'Alessandro—and the International Research Group of Children's Literature: *lettera per la formazione interculturale e pedagogica* (readings for intercultural and pedagogical training). International scholars often participated as key speakers: Michael Everson, Kiera Vaclavik, and Zoe Jaques (co-author of *Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass: A Publishing History*, Routledge, 2016), among others.

The conference is always structured in two sessions. The first, named "Wonderland Corner," is dedicated to Lewis Carroll and is a result of my studies and classes focusing on this topic and on the positive response to and interest in the Carrollian literary and cultural universe coming from the students of our university. Every year the conference has had a specific theme: toys and gifts, tales of friendship, representations of evil, "Green" worlds and dreaming about sustainable life, or animals. The second session is opened to cross-disciplinary perspectives—pedagogical, philosophical, sociological, and media studies approaches to the topic—and is named "Wonderland Literary Suggestions and Beyond."

On December 2 of last year, the conference was dedicated to "the mirror"; its title can be translated "In Alice's Mirror: The Self and the Other." There were ten presentations, including Stephanie Lovett's "First Glances and Second Thoughts," which enriched the conference with a marvelous and overarching view of what Carrollian studies mean and how the LCSNA contributes to the field. Adriana Peliano of the Lewis Carroll Society of Brazil had an important role too, giving us a view of how a Brazilian exhibition celebrated the *Looking-*

Glass sesquicentennial; a collage by this amazing artist was the image on our official conference poster. And, as always happens, the students of Suor Orsola Benincasa High School of Art, guided by Professor Tiziana De Tora, exhibited their artistic reactions to the topic.

During the conference, a publishing project, "Wonder-Lands Publications," was announced; it will be a new editorial series directed by professors Ciro Pizzo and myself. I deeply thank the LCSNA for its interest and friendship, born during Alice150 in New York. A Christmas of Wonders will be ten years old next December. We are getting ready to come up with a new theme, and it will be open to new contributions; stay tuned for the announcement.

ENCOUNTERING ALICE IN JAPAN

Amanda Kennell

Alice has a long and proud history of adaptation in Japan. At the tail end of April, twenty scholars and collectors gathered in the University of Southern California's Doheny Memorial Library to mine that history for insights into Japan's media, clothing, and gender norms; the legacy of post-World War II censorship; the Japanese language; new, digital technologies like text mining, ChatGPT, and MidJourney; and, of course, Alice. The research presented was uniformly excellent, perhaps because it had had three years of seasoning when Covid-19 delayed the planned 2020 conference date. The conference's sponsors—USC Libraries, the USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture, and the Northeast Asia Council of the Association of Asian Studies—kindly continued their support through the seemingly interminable wait.

I was lucky enough to be involved with the conference from its gestation due to my involvement

with USC Libraries' Cassady Collection, which at more than 5,000 items overall and more than 300 Japanese items, houses the largest publicly accessible collection of Japanese Carrollian materials outside of Japan.

Encountering Alice in Japan builds on years of work collecting, organizing, and studying Alice by collection founders George and Linda Cassady, curators Abby Saunders and Dr. Rebecca Corbett, and scholars including myself, Dr. Jesse Drian, and a host of faculty across the University of Southern California—to say nothing of the stellar support offered by the University's librarians and staff. I believe that every presentation featured at least one item from the Collection.

Given the Collection's central role in spurring the research presented, the conference opened by surveying its creation, impact, and potential. Then followed a special highlight, a keynote speech by translator, emeritus professor, and co-founder of the Lewis Carroll Society of Japan, Kimie Kusumoto. As a translator, Kusumoto is notable for how attentive she is to the interplay of text and illustration. Her scholarship includes the award-winning 翻訳の国の「アリス」 (*Alice in Translation-land*), a history and analysis of Japanese *Alice* translations (that ought to be translated into English). Kusumoto updated Warren Weaver's analysis of Japanese *Alice* translations and expanded upon his work by integrating a truly impressive ability with not only the Japanese language but the art of wordplay as well.

She concluded that *Alice* testifies “to the amazing diversity of Japanese literature,” and that great books naturally merit the production of many translations. Her discussant, Dr. Michael Emmerich, agreed that *Alice* “draws translators to it” and added a technological angle to her remarks by noting that the appearance of artificial intelligence translations should prompt us to think about why we translate.

Jesse Drian also approached *Alice* technologically, using text-mining techniques to settle the question of who, exactly, was responsible for which parts of Akutagawa Ryūnosuke and Kikuchi Kan's Joint 1927 translation of *Alice's Adventures*. (The matter is unclear because it was an unplanned collaboration that resulted from Akutagawa's sudden death, and because Akutagawa seems to have used Kusuyama Masao's 1920 translation as a guide in his writing process.) Technology was also a theme in USC Libraries' 2023 Wonderland Awards ceremony, where first place went to a series of prints of the fauna of Wonderland that Lillia Murtonen created via an iterative process of artificial intelligence generation.

Where Drian and Murtonen took *Alice* into the future, Dr. Rebecca Suter, Dr. Masafumi Monden, and Ms. Kana Jenkins used it to explore the past. Jenkins discussed the Gordon W. Prange Collection of Japanese publications from the post-WWII American Occupation period and the potential it holds for *Alice*-related research. Suter situated Alice's popularity in Japan within a patriarchal context that made European settings as popular as Japanese settings in girls' manga and anime. Suter's analysis of European influences in Japanese culture paired neatly with Dr. Franziska Kohlt's analysis of *Alice*'s role in global tourism. Kohlt argued that Alice can function equally well as an iconoclast and a vessel for nostalgia, making her useful to many people whilst allowing her to evolve over time.

Monden analyzed Iwadate Mariko's 1991 アリスにお願い (*Please Alice*), a manga aimed at girls, in some depth to point out that the character of the girl in Japanese culture is marked by an oscillation between innocence and cruelty, which Alice amply expresses. Consequently, Alice can “represent more

complex, ambivalent, and transgressive identities.” Indeed, the idea of Alice as possessing multiple, flexible identities resonated throughout the conference.

Dr. Stacey Jocoy and I similarly examined the past, but focused, in a sense, on the evolution of genres. Jocoy tracked the influence of Victorian music and the Japanese genre of *shōka* on the soundtracks of anime adaptations. I drew on my forthcoming book, *Alice in Japanese Wonderlands*, to detail the history of the mystery genre in Japan through the lens of *Alice*. *Alice* mysteries suture a post-WWII split of the mystery genre into two subgenres, orthodox mysteries and society mysteries.

Dr. Michelle Liu Carriger had the unenviable task of presenting on Japan's *Alice*-based Lolita fashion subculture to multiple scholars who have published on the subject, but she rose to the occasion admirably. Carriger detailed a variety of ways in which Alice can be cited by Lolitas, as practitioners are called, including the use of Alice symbols such as clocks, wearing the classic blue dress and/or accessories like a Mad Hatter's hat, and the deployment of the name “Alice” in brand names such as A+Lidel and Alice and the Pirates.

The final presenter, Dr. Anne McKnight, wove together a string of theories related to performance and the underground theater to suggest that Alice's constant transformations in Carroll's texts mean that we can think of her as an event, rather than a specific person or object. If so, she has no specific essence or solidity. In other words, scholars attempting to track down Alice's true essence may have been deceived into searching for something that does not really exist.

On that provocative note, scholars retired for much-needed sustenance. Encountering Alice in Japan underscored the possibilities contained within the Cassady Collection and highlighted the role it

plays as a stimulant to scholarship and creativity. USC Libraries offers funding, in the form of Wallis Anenberg Research Grants, to support research in the collection.



SURRÉALICE

Ilaria Cremaschini

From November 19, 2022, to February 26, 2023, the Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg hosted two astonishing exhibitions under the *SurréAlice* banner: *Lewis Carroll et les Surréalistes* at the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain (MAMCS) and a complementary one, *Illustr'Alice*, at the Musée Tomi Ungerer.

Thus, at the end of January, I found myself traveling from my home in Italy to Strasbourg. The city, at the crossroads of France and Germany, is at its best in December, thanks to the Christmas markets that make it so romantic. In spring, too, it proves to be a special city to visit: The flowers make this Petite France a cozy place that can be discovered through its typical Alsatian cuisine. Therefore, why would anyone ever decide to visit it in the off season? Indeed, Strasbourg was a very empty city when I was there,

with few tourists and many closed restaurants.

It's incredible how a story born on a golden afternoon so influenced and became a part of artistic manifestos from centuries past to nowadays. The first appearance of Alice (and the Snark) in André Breton and Paul Eluard's *Dictionnaire Abrégé du Surréalisme* was in 1938 on the occasion of their *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme* at the Galerie Beaux-Arts. This connection was rooted in Breton himself, who had been quoting Carroll in various articles. But how was an artistic movement born out of the nonconformity of dadaism linked to Alice and Wonderland? The answers lie within *SurréAlice*.

The connection is simpler than one might imagine: Nonsense, the deliberate choice to distort reality, and dreaming are some of the pillars of surrealism, and key themes of Carroll's works as well. Although *Alice* was a product of the Victorian era, in the first years of the twentieth century, she became the heroine of an iconic artistic movement in Europe until the end of the '60s.

The Carrollian world already knows of this partnership, which can be summed up with Salvador Dalí's illustrated edition (1969),¹ but the influence of *Wonderland* is more complex and involves both visual and literary works. René Magritte shows a strong connection with

Carroll, not only with paintings such as *Alice au Pays des Merveilles* (1945), but also with his constant game of the changing of scale of painted subjects.

In the exhibition, the link between Alice and certain female figures of the surrealist movement was an authentic discovery; these women often chose "Alice" as their nickname and became symbols of the metamorphosis between childhood and adulthood. For artists like Claude Cahun, Alice became an icon of transgression of identity and gender.

Games made up another element, from cards to chess to puzzles; perhaps that was the most enigmatic and intriguing of all the exhibit's rooms. It started with Marcel Duchamp, a great lover and champion of the game of chess.

Leaving the exhibition, one realizes how Lewis Carroll and his works have marked the twentieth century not only in pop culture, a phenomenon due in part to Walt Disney, but also in the way he has inspired artists as few other writers have managed to do.²

But nothing excited me as much as the *Illustr'Alice* exhibition. Alice is able to reach readers in such different forms that she does not have her own real face: One artist wants her to be blonde and long-haired, as Sir John Tenniel portrayed her; another portrays her as a short-haired brunette, as similar as possible to Alice Liddell. In reality, many of today's readers picture her in a blue dress, a design created by Mary Blair for Disney in 1951. Since she was born, Alice has been taken on by such a large number of published illustrators that today it is still impossible to have an exact count, although we know it is approaching close to two thousand. Just think that every year there are dozens of new illustrated editions all over the world with different styles, not to mention the countless pieces of fan art that populate the world of the web.



Alice is a muse who asks nothing and gives a lot. Artists who tend to be dismissed as mere illustrators are too often left in the background; it is rare to find their works in a museum. For this reason, the exhibition created by the Musée Tomi Ungerer finally gives space to the art hidden behind the drawings that populate the books. Indeed, giving a face to the protagonists of stories can make a difference, and influence a reader forever: Think about whose was the first face of Alice that you saw—for you it will remain your original Alice. This is not a small responsibility for artists, who, with a blank sheet in front of them, have to give shape to a character who is only described, and who boasts many interpretations, from the vintage ones by Tenniel, Rackham, and Libico Maraja, to those of the latest publications.³ Standing out is the true proof of an artist.

Illustr’Alice was, in my opinion, one of the most beautiful experiences that a Wonderland lover could have: The works on display not only contained the great European names, but also compared the same scenes, thus elevating the stylistic choices, the scenic composition, the color or chiaroscuro. Imagine for a moment that you find in front of you many tables laden with different

Hatters; you wonder which one you would like to sit at, and perhaps the answer is simply: all of them.

Alice’s cultural impact is not seen only through books and images. In this exhibition, it was possible to see many videos, such as *Betty in Blunderland* (1934), in which Betty Boop, an animated icon from the ’30s, finds herself following a rabbit who has escaped from the jigsaw puzzle she is doing. There are satirical panel cartoons too, able to portray in a single image the likeness of a country and its intolerable politicians.

The last aspect, perhaps least taken into consideration, is the erotic sphere of *Alice* illustrations. Unfortunately, there were only a few works by Antoine Bernhart (prints, not from a book). In my opinion, we should explore this area in more depth, considering works in which Alice plays the role of a modern Lolita, a figure that, however, we cannot reduce to a simple Hentai speck.

If you missed these exhibitions, do not despair—a superb catalogue is available for purchase online. Although it is in French, anyone will be able to find within it the splendid collection that the MAMCS and Musée Tomi Ungerer have managed to create, as well as many other sources and images not shown at the two exhibitions.

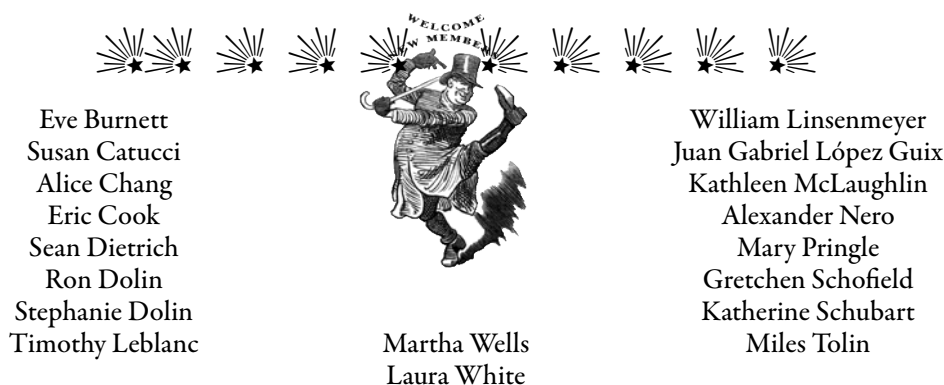
I would love it if this French experience were replicated by other museums in Europe and North America.

Endnotes

¹ A trade edition of which was published by Princeton University Press in 2015; its frontmatter contains a fine introduction to the history of surrealism and Alice.

² Artists exhibited include Eileen Agar, Alechinsky, Hans Arp, Enrico Baj, Hans Bellmer, Victor Brauner, Camille Bryen, Claude Cahun, Leonora Carrington, Joseph Cornell, Salvador Dalí, Frédéric Delanglade, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Jane Graverol, Simon Hantaï, Georges Hugnet, Wilfredo Lam, René Magritte, E. L. T. Mesens, Paul Nougé, Meret Oppenheim, Gisèle Prassinos, Man Ray, Jan Svankmajer, Jidrich Styrsky, Dorothea Tanning, Roland Topor, Toyen, Clovis Trouille, and Unica Zürn.

³ Artists exhibited include Dagmar Berková, Peter Blake, Antony Browne, Claire Bouilhac, Nicole Claveloux, F’Murr, Folon, Henri Galaron, Alain Gauthier, Nicolas Guilbert, Tove Jansson, Dušan Kallay, Barry Moser, Thomas Nast, Markéta Prachatiká, Mervyn Peake, Borislav Sajtinac, Ronald Searle, Ralph Steadman, Roland Topor, Jiří Trnka, Leonard Weisgard, and Alice B. Woodward.



Into a Strange Land

Dr. Steven Strange's epic tale began in *Strange Tales* #110 (July 1963) and continued there and in *Marvel Premiere* comics; he was awarded his own eponymous comic, *Doctor Strange: Master of the Mystic Arts*, in June, 1968. The first issue of Volume 2 in that series (June, 1974) contains the story "Through an Orb Darkly" (hmm), which begins with his girlfriend Clea (a near anagram of Alice) manifesting a white rabbit. He soon meets Silver Dagger, a foe who looks exactly like Tenniel's White Knight. Strange soon finds himself falling down, down, down through a crystal ball, landing with a THUMP. He immediately sees a beatnik caterpillar sitting atop a mushroom and smoking a hookah. They discuss the nature of reality until the good Doctor runs off, as the caterpillar says, "but our conversation . . . is not yet . . . over!" A battle ensues, in which the caterpillar says things like "The furthest inside is the closest to the outside, dig?" In issue No. 2, "A Separate Reality," the good Doctor continues his investigation of "reality," mentions *Alice in Wonderland* by name, and fights a soul-eating demon that looks like a Jabberwock. The Silver Surfer soon appears, leading him to the castle of the White Queen, where some other superheroes (Hulk, Spiderman, etc.) are having a tea party. The tale continues through issue #5, where Strange, having faced Death (and died), eventually comes back to our reality, alive and even more powerful.

The stories were drawn by Frank Brunner, who went on to produce two portfolios of erotic art: *Alice in Wonderland* (Golden Graphics, 1977) and *Through the Looking-Glass* (Golden Graphics, 1981).

The former five stories were recently anthologized in *Doctor Strange Epic Collection #3: A Separate Reality* (Marvel, 2021); the latter in *Brunner's Carnal Delights* (Carnal Comics, 2005).

... and how she would gather about



her other little children, and make their eyes bright and eager with many a strange tale . . .

—★—
Аліса в Країні Див
(*Alice in Wonderland*)

Illustrated by Inna Maslyak
Ранок [Ranok], 2019
ISBN: 978-6170955289

Yvonne Kacy

This oversize Ukrainian edition (10×13 in.) was one of the winners for illustration in the "Image of the Book" awards in Moscow in 2020. The illustrator, Inna Maslyak, is also an author and artist. Maslyak's illustrations are simple, colorful, spacious, and child-friendly, but what makes them most original is the innovative use of three-dimensional geometry.

When I started doing sketches for *Alice*, I based the concept on the Necker cube. It stands at the very beginning of the book. Then the curvature of space,



Maslyak

which was bending and distorting. It was all very interesting. And ambiguous. The main question was: Do we change reality by observation? That was the basis of my illustrations.

The cover portrays a very striking rabbit hole, a geometric polygon tube to another dimension. The Pool of Tears is another geometric tube, visually intriguing and effective. The Caucus Race has a geometric diagram reminiscent of the lines of da Vinci's Vitruvian Man sketch of superimposed circle and square.

The Duchess sits on a geometric Necker cube—again showing the changing dimensions of Wonderland with an optical illusion—and holds her piglet baby wrapped like a caterpillar pupa, with flying plates and Hungarian hot peppers surrounding her. A huge flamingo's head and neck dominate a double page spread, and another page has an equally large profile of the Queen of Hearts, with the piercing viridescent eyes of Shakespeare's green-eyed monster.

Typography is playful, with characters' thoughts or speech rendered large. An entire page is taken up by Alice wondering over and over if she will grow or shrink.

—★—
Аліса в Страні чудес
(*Alice in Wonderland*)

Retold with commentary
by V. P. Butromeev
Filipok, 2019

ISBN 978-5-6041556-8-4

Dmitry Yermolovich

This book impresses one immediately with its sheer size (9×12×1¼ inches), mass (4½ pounds, 448 pages), and printing quality: It is printed on an excellent smooth-finish light-yellow paper, is packed with illustrations (most of them in color and many full-page), and has a pictorial hard cover with embossed and varnished elements, not to mention a red ribbon bookmark. The

book's designers also deserve credit for the amazing ornamental page frames found at the beginning of each chapter and also on every page of the book's last part (to which I'll return later).

Talking of the illustrations, their assortment looks, well, a little weird. Although some are taken from various earlier public-domain editions of *Wonderland*, and a few others are pictures of Lewis Carroll, the Liddell family, Oxford, and other places in Britain, arguably a good half of the illustrations do not seem particularly relevant. Their subjects vary from automobiles to distant galaxies, varieties of garden berries to types of clouds, Socrates to Dante, and so on. There's also an obvious slant toward images rooted in Russian culture and history, such as a troika, a samovar, a dish of blini, a medovik (Russian honey-cake) baking pan, a Russian merchant's wife in a low-necked dress, Russian tsars, soldiers, authors, and the like. I counted at least four pictures of the poet Alexander Pushkin and five of Tsar Peter the Great.

To clarify what all these pictures are doing in the book, one naturally turns to their captions, but some of them openly proclaim no association whatsoever: "A dog which is totally irrelevant here" (p. 72); "Catherine the Second, not a queen but a Russian empress, who has nothing to do with Alice except that, as a child, she was also a very curious girl" (p. 275). The book numbers around two dozen pictures of girls and young women (maybe more) with the uniform explanation: "Alice, if her portrait had been painted by the artist [name or description follows, e.g., an ancient Egyptian painter, the Russian artist G. Ostrovsky, the Italian painter A. Bronzini]." There's even "One of Alice's hands, had it been depicted by the English painter T. Gainsborough" (p. 156). The question is, how does Mr. Butromeev know?

Incidentally, the book cover is adorned with a picture of a Russian peasant girl by Aleksei Venetsianov, an early nineteenth-century painter of rural life. The girl is cute, no doubt, but considering that all peasants in Venetsianov's time were serfs—that is, slaves of the land-owner class—it is open to question how she is supposed to represent Carroll's Alice.

Some of the captions are certain to send the reader's eyebrows up: "As the saying goes, [women have] long hair and short sense" (p. 241); "I hate the French together with their Napoleon" (p. 296).

Well, it's about time we turned to the body of the book. It is, indeed, a loose retelling of *Alice in Wonderland*, but the part traceable to Lewis Carroll's text is drowning in Mr. Butromeev's exercises at expanding and "embellishing" the original with whatever ideas and associations may have crossed his mind in the process (including remarks on and quotes from some earlier Russian translations). No, the annotations are not given in separate boxes or pages—it's a story-and-notes mix styled in affectedly child-directed language.

An inscription on the back cover says: "Read this book, and you will understand Alice!" And the foreword claims that it's "an encyclopedia of world culture for young and adult readers alike" which "must doubtlessly be translated into all the languages in which the original Alice exists."

Well, let me do my bit to comply with that plea and translate a sample for you. Here is a piece of the "encyclopedic" knowledge you can draw from this edition (pp. 17–19):

What kind of country is it, England, and what is it famous for in the first place?

First, everybody in England loves to eat oatmeal, and horses eat oats with pleasure, but also hay, of course, when oats are short.

Secondly, the English do not only eat bread-and-butter,

as is the custom in Germany, from where they have resettled to the island of Great Britain. The German word for bread-and-butter is Butterbrot. The English have somewhat forgotten the German language, which used to be their native tongue, and speak English only, which is the reason why they also put a piece of ham or cold veal between two slices of bread. That type of food was invented by the Earl of Sandwich, and that's why they're called sandwiches. The English seafarer Cook was very fond of grabbing a sandwich without interrupting his business.

That Cook, short as his name is, made two voyages 'round the world. He circled the globe one time from west to east, then another time from east to west, and thus got convinced that the globe was round, no matter how you circle it. Cook discovered Australia and nearly Antarctica with its eternal ice, but then he discovered the Hawaiian Islands and called them the Sandwich Islands in honor of the earl who had invented ham sandwiches. Cook wanted to teach locals to make sandwiches but, speaking no English, they did not understand him and ate Cook himself instead.

The rest of the book's "encyclopedic" additions are of similar quality, being full of trite stereotypes and dubious "facts."

The parts traceable to Carroll's text are associated with it very loosely. The book's general writing style is not always grammatical or logical. This is how, for example, the Duchess explains the Cheshire Cat's grin (as in most other Russian versions of *Wonderland*, mistranslated as "smile"): "It's a Cheshire Cat. They smile exactly in the same way as cats in Russia stuff themselves

with pancakes at Shrovetide.” (Do not think this makes any more sense in Russian than it does in English.)

The poems are given in copyright-expired versions by early twentieth-century translators, sometimes several at once. Some are credited right in the text, while others are not—but no, those are not the work of Mr. Butromeev either. Their author, mentioned inconspicuously in endnotes, is A. P. Rozhdestvenskaya, although the quality of her verse, as has been noted by several critics, is below par. Based mostly on what’s called “impoverished rhymes” between verb infinitives, they look like an amateur poet’s first and extremely inept steps.

Now let me quote from the last part of the book, entitled “The Roots and Branches of Lewis Carroll’s/Charles Lutwidge Dodgson’s Life Tree.” Those roots, according to Mr. Butromeev, go back thousands of years (p. 369):

Obsidian is black volcanic glass. Had Carroll written his *Through the Looking-Glass* 7,500 years ago, all the characters of his book would have

the same face color as the black slaves that Lewis Carroll’s maternal ancestors traded in.

Insightful, is it not?

To sum it up, the book’s design and quality are several orders of magnitude above the quality of its content, a hard mix of dated stereotypes, weird associations, and a near parody of an encyclopedia. Nice to hold in one’s hands and to look through, but not recommended for reading to or by children.



*Alice in Wonderland:
A Series of Drawings*

Cavin Jones

Independently published
[POD], 2020

ISBN 979-98605235187

Andrew Ogus

This black-and-white pen-and-ink series is an intriguing example of the wide range of Carrollian inspiration. Cavin Jones did his first Alice drawing in high school, a huge, complex image called “Into the Looking-Glass.” Returning to Alice as an adult, he worked with an unusual model to render Alice as a mature Black woman. Although this Alice is almost a visual opposite of the

original, in homage to Tenniel her tank top is accompanied by striped tights. Many human and some animal characters in these charming and imaginative illustrations appear as African sculpture come to life. Black-and-white patterned floors swirl below them, black-and-white-striped walls sometimes surround them. Light and shadow are skillfully rendered, but the almost obsessive mark-making and too even texture mean the background sometimes obscure the figures, making them hard to find. One wishes for negative space, or strong solid areas of light and/or dark.

Jones’s own verbal interpretations of the scenes he’s chosen to depict—“Alice Reading,” “A Tiny Alice,” “The Caucus Race” (including an aardvark, as well as the requisite Dodo, Duck, Lory, and Eaglet), “Alice Finds the Door into the Queen’s Lands”—accompany each image. Extensive explanations follow the drawings.

The uncomfortable, far too wide, erratically arranged text and errors reflect the independence of the production. Admirable though his efforts are, Jones would have been well served by another eye or two to help with format and editing.



Run Towards the Danger

Sarah Polley

Penguin Press, 2022

ISBN 978-0593300350

Rose Owens

This memoir by Sarah Polley, the accomplished actress, writer, and director, is subtitled “Confrontations with a Body of Memory” and is full of essays that both trouble and inspire. I highly recommend this book for those who identify as female, who have had major physical ailments, or who have repeatedly butted up against difficult men around gender and sexual power issues. It is not only for those demographics, but the text will resonate



Jones

especially well for those with such experiences.

The first essay in the book is of most pertinence to our readers. “Alice, Collapsing” documents not only Polley’s interactions with the *Wonderland/Looking-Glass* texts as a child, but also her performance as Alice in a large theater production as a teenager, while undergoing emotional and physical obstacles. Alice’s transformations in the original texts are mirrored in Polley’s debilitating scoliosis and stage fright, and we are privy to the intense, high-pressure world of a child actor. Her cast- and crewmates embody the inhabitants of Wonderland both in the play and as foils/ supports in her real life; this is captured particularly well in the depiction of Douglas Rain, the actor best known as the voice of HAL in 2001. Polley’s journey through the play and determining that her personal well-being must be prioritized over the obligations of the theater form a powerful and charged introduction to this work.

Of note, Polley states in no uncertain terms that she finds Dodgson’s relationship with Alice Liddell problematic, and she repeatedly references this view throughout. Readers should be aware of this before starting this essay.



Alice in Wonderland

Lo Scarabeo, 2022 (Italian)

ISBN 978-8865277966

Llewellyn Worldwide, 2023 (English)

ISBN 978-0738775852

Illustrated by Paolo Barbieri

Andrew Ogun

Here is a *Wonderland* for adults rather than children, with excerpted text and a sexy Alice (perhaps too much so, in the final, aerial view), and a bit of a graphic-novel air to the gorgeous pictures. Alice is an action heroine, an intrepid young

woman with short blonde hair, in steampunk garb with a stuffed rabbit on her belt and a chessboard pattern on her stockings. She is curious about everything she sees, a bit apologetic to the Pigeon, undaunted by the size of the Gryphon, bewildered by the trial. A sense of the dangers of Wonderland hangs over all: Many characters have the faintly wary look of Henry VIII’s courtiers in Holbein’s drawings. Not, however, the flexible, twisting Cheshire Cat, clearly enjoying its own madness as it dissolves into baroque swirls, or the supremely confident, commanding Queen of Hearts.

Almost every character is dressed or accessorized, even so minor a character as one of the crabs. Enormous roses fall out of the White Rabbit’s gigantic fan. A goldfish is trapped in the upper part of a lovely blue lamp that hangs above Alice as she weeps the pool of tears. An indifferent ladybug rests on the enormous hand thrust out of the White Rabbit’s house. Brave Bill the Lizard is prepared for every eventuality with a heavy tool belt. At the trial he has replaced it with a handsome cravat, in one of the funniest pictures in the book, ink swirling about his head. The Duchess’s Cook is hung with pots and pans. Alice’s elongated neck circles the myopic Pigeon’s tree, casting a shadow on its trunk. The Hatter’s hat is a cage for butterflies.

Oddly, the frumpy, overdressed Duchess has a pig in her arms. The fabulous lobsters are exquisitely dressed for their dance, but red; have they already been cooked? A hint of the Mock Turtle’s potential fate? But these small flaws only serve to highlight Barbieri’s achievement.

It is almost two books in one: Gorgeous full-color pages alternate throughout with silhouetted sepia-tone pencil drawings, where, in one case, a clock-headed Time appears, looking like something out of the Oz books. These drawings are enclosed by rustic wooden frames that

the characters sometimes break out of or across. Delicate decorations embellish the text and sepia pages. The typefaces are well chosen and legible.

Let us hope Barbieri goes through the Looking-Glass soon.

A sample of his art is shown on p. 59.



A través del espejo (y lo que Alicia encontró allí)

Illustrated by Sozapato

Fondo de Cultura Económica
(México), 2022

ISBN: 978-6071675576

Yvonne Kacy

This Spanish-language version pulses with the vibrant colors of the homeland of the Ecuadorian artist and illustrator Sofia Zapata Ochoa, known by her professional name of Sozapato. Sozapato founded Ommani, the first Ecuadorian publishing house that develops philosophical material for children, and her book *Debajo de hoy* won the prestigious Darío Guevara Mayorga prize for the best illustrated book of 2018.

Her numerous digitally created illustrations for *Through the Looking-Glass* are vivid and stylized. She writes, “I wanted the characters to look like children’s drawings come to life, so I used half-drawn details to reinforce the feeling that this world is constantly being built. Thus, the



Sozapato

absurd possibilities, both of the text and of the illustrations, become more credible—and even necessary.”

The colorful illustrations are full of whimsical charm: A marvelously plump Unicorn dominates one picture, daintily jumping up in the air like a baby blimp, while the Lion and the White King furtively wolf down sandwiches in the background.

The mirror image of this world is portrayed by means of different reflections, as with the image of the Sheep and Alice in the boat, where their reflections are switched. Other objects also have unusual reflections in the water: The oar becomes an anchor, the knitted scarf becomes an alligator, even the water is stitched to its own reflection with a woolen yarn that is present in each illustration. We see this yarn in the beginning of the book, where Alice’s thoughts are personified by the shapes of the wool above her head: “I used the wool as a symbol of Alice’s imagination, and as the common thread to connect each scene.” In the last illustration, when Alice wakes up from her woolly dream, the other characters disappear into half-drawn stick drawings.”

Each scene has a specific point: “I wanted each illustration to be an invitation to expand the world that Carroll describes.” The illustration of Humpty Dumpty has two birds supporting him, so he does not fall down. “The reader can see these two birds, but Alice does not have the necessary perspective to see them. The broken egg on the other side of the wall (which Alice can’t see either): Was that egg Humpty? How many times could Humpty crack before he really died? Or if it wasn’t Humpty, who was he? Was he kinder than Humpty? Why did he fall?”

So the artist wants the reader to question reality with her, at every step of the story. The cover shows a

small blue hat with Alice reflected in it. “Which is the real hat, and which is the reflection? Is Alice real, or is she a reflection?”

There is also a recurring creature in the book: “I used it to subtly imply that all the characters in the book are actually Alice. That is why, on the front cover, it looks like a giant mask that Alice can remove, and, on the back cover, it appears as a complete being (not a disguise), but its ‘real’ version seems to be the shadow of its sketch version, which in turn opens more questions about this world.”

This version, with its vividly colorful childlike style mixed with deeply existential ponderings, is one of the most intriguing *Looking-Glass* editions published lately. Recommended for lovers of quirky treasure hunts and South American magic realism.



Аліса у Дивокраї
(AW, Ukrainian)

A-BA-BA-GA-LA-MA-GA, 2018

ISBN 978-6175851531

Алиса в Стране чудес
(AW, Russian)

Willi Winki, 2018

ISBN 978-5171089597

Аліса у Задзеркаллі
(LG, Ukrainian)

A-BA-BA-GA-LA-MA-GA, 2020

ISBN 978-6175851869

Алиса в Зазеркалье
(LG, Russian)

Willi Winki, 2019

ISBN 978-5171179564

Алиса в Стране чудес / в Зазеркалье

(AW & LG, Russian)

Willi Winki, 2022

ISBN 978-5171185343

Illustrated by Galina Zin'ko

Andrew Ogus



Zin'ko

Galina Zin'ko's compositions in these extraordinary versions of the *Alice* books are striking throughout, with strong negative spaces, remarkable perspectives, and juxtapositions that fill the reader's head with new ideas and give a sense of their development. The rich color palette is handsome, somber, and glowing.

Alice, like her real-life namesake, is a child with dark bobbed hair. Her size seems to vary even more than described in the text; she towers over the Gryphon and Mock Turtle. Alice despairs below the glass table. Her eye peers through a keyhole, the only bright spot on a spread otherwise devoted to the side of a door. Alice's hand knocks poor Bill off the ladder at the White Rabbit's house, rather than her foot kicking him up the chimney. This is amusing, but so radically different from the text that one wonders if something was changed in transla-

tion. The Cheshire Cat winks its eye. In a striking image, Alice's feet and ankles dominate the garden. The royal cards are crowned with enormous roses. The Duchess is surprisingly elegant. The Lobster Quadrille chapter opens with a delightful blue spread of blue creatures in a blue sea.

In *Looking-Glass*, the chess pieces retain simple forms, towering over Alice. The Tweedle brothers suggest two enormous ice cream cones, the fatal rattle as yet unnoticed. Humpty-Dumpty is perhaps the size of an ostrich egg. The White Knight flies off his prancing horse, a steed straight out of a Renaissance painting. There are strikingly different approaches to the short chapters at the end: Chapter 10 an abstraction, Chapter 11 a lovely overhead view of a slowly waking Alice with her hand caressing the black kitten, an open copy of *Wonderland* beside her.

The type is attractive, though the Ukrainian alphabet is unknown to

this reviewer. In the first book, the poetry text slants and changes size effectively. It is a particular pleasure to discover different, delightful images on each endpaper in each book.



Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Illustrated by Hiroko Hanna

HannAlice, 2012

ISBN 978-4990674304

Yvonne Kacy

The celebrated Japanese artist Hiroko Hanna was inspired by a photograph of Alice Liddell to create a series of paintings and publish them in a gorgeous keepsake box set. Two different formats are included: thumbnail-size illustrations in an English-language edition and an oversized art book with the illustrations bellows-folded that unfolds as a continuous piece of art. When extended, it's 32 feet (10 meters) long, allowing you to experience



Hanna

Wonderland the way Alice did, unfolding beneath your eyes. The box itself is 15 × 14.2 × 1.4 inches (35.5 × 37.5 × 3 cm). The “scroll” can also be framed or hung on the wall, like a decorative tapestry.

For Alice’s Day on July 4th, 2015, Hanna’s paintings were printed as a 5½ × 100-foot (1.7 × 33 meter) Emaki picture scroll and displayed in Oxford.

The effect of the unfolded art is striking: The 26 paintings flow together like an enchanted visual river, with unusual oneiric, surrealistic, and dystopian influences: Alice bursts out of the Rabbit’s house like a caterpillar bursting out of its cocoon; the Caterpillar himself resembles a fire breathing dragon with the smoke from his steampunk mechanical hookah pipe. The Pool of Tears is a river of adventure that one must ford like a latter-day Heraclitus, while the Duchess’s house has a river of smoke running through it. The Cheshire Cat’s tail starts to unroll like an Egyptian mummy’s bandages, and the Lobster Quadrille’s dystopian-machine sea-creatures are straight out of Victorian steampunk. Alice is consistently based on photographs of Miss Liddell.

The text, sadly, comes from the error-ridden Project Gutenberg version, but this book was not really meant for reading.

With its oneiric art, limited edition, and very unusual format, this is a marvelous book for collectors. The box set is signed by the artist and limited to 1,000 numbered copies, available for ¥20,000 (\$142) from www.hannalice.com.

爱丽丝漫游奇境记 (AW)
Gansu Children’s Publishing
House, 2022
Illustrations by Jesús Sotés
ISBN 978-7-5422-6560-92

Yvonne Kacy

This edition, which won the New Talent award at the 2022 Beijing International Book Fair Illustration Exhibition, features the intricate illustrations of the Spanish artist and graphic designer Jesús Sotés.

Sotés has a passion for using masses of exuberant foliage for decorating his artworks, and this foliage is one of the highlights of this book. The natural world is ever-present in his Wonderland, with an abundance of flora and fauna on almost every page. This profusely illustrated edition features insects, animals, flowers, birds, vegetation, minor characters, and other things not usually portrayed in editions of *Alice*. His depiction of the Tea-Party is a striking example of his style and was chosen as the official cover for the 2021 *BIBF Ananas International Illustration Exhibition Annual* catalogue.

The human and animal characters in this book are stylized, with strong, elegant shapes used to construct the figures. According to a Spanish review, his style is “elegant, bold, and a bit extreme, as he likes to force his characters to adopt uncomfortable positions while at the same time surrounding them with an air of loneliness and mystery, with something sad, strange, and powerful in most of his work.”

Sotés lives in Pamplona and says he was influenced by medieval paintings and illuminated manuscripts like those in the famous Pamplona Bible. These medieval artworks, which “have not been surrounded by complex perspectives and bright colors,” provided inspiration for his characters, especially

in the depiction of the King and Queen of Hearts, both in the formal garden scene and in the courtroom, which could be taken from a painting of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Spanish monarchs.

His color palette in the second half of the book, especially in the court scenes, reflects the colors of the Spanish flag, with reds and oranges predominant. This is in great contrast to the colors in the first half of the story, in which a verdant green palette is used. His depiction of the Caucus Race chapter is of note, as it’s not the Pool of Tears that is the focus of the scene, but a lush oasis of green, a primordial Garden of Eden, in which Alice stands with the thimble like Eve with her apple, surrounded by the animals (including a Dodo wearing tartan and a top hat). With his use of the contrasting palettes, Sotés strove to “give cohesion through color and esthetics, without being uniform or boring.”

Describing himself as “an analog illustrator who has just not let go of digital tools,” his technique consisted of taking drawings on paper and tracing them “freehand” with a mouse, combined with a Bézier curve pen, then adding color digitally.

At the end of the book, there is a surprise bonus, a pop-up of the card gardeners painting the rose bushes.

So far this book, which was created by The Old Dungate Press in Dunsfold, Surrey, UK, has been published only in Chinese, but it is hoped that it will be issued in other countries and languages as well, as it’s an absolute jewel of a book.

A sample of his art is shown on the facing page.

GALLERY



Sotés



Barbieri



Jasinski

ART & ILLUSTRATION

A truly charming wordless re-telling of the tale for all ages can be found in *Alice Quebra Cabeça* (Alice Puzzle), created by Adriana Peliano and her then-five-year-old nephew, Jorge Dutra Freitas. In colorful tangram-like shapes, the story sweetly unfolds before your eyes. Write to her at alicemaravilha@gmail.com.

In 2014, the talented artist Maria Kolyshkina (Мария Колышкина) created 25 illustrations for *Wonderland* using a classical etching technique, some with watercolor added. A lovely hand-made fine-press book of the prints (monochrome and sans text) was published that year in an edition of thirty copies by A. Danilov of St. Petersburg. It's boxed, leatherbound, and measures 12 × 17 inches (30 × 44 cm). Copies, signed and numbered by the artist, are available at piteroldbook.ru for around \$1,450. In the near future, a full-color edition with the text will be published by Rare Book (Редкая Книга); it will be reviewed in our pages.

Easton Press has released a deluxe leatherbound, slipcased edition of *Wonderland* with pictures by Basque artist Arantza Sestayo. It's 9 × 11 inches, 160 pp., and retails for \$395.

George Walker's 96 remarkable woodcut illustrations to *Wonderland* first appeared in the fine-press edition put out by the Cheshire Cat Press in 1988, an edition nearly impossible to find these days. Fortunately, a trade edition came along in 2011 from Porcupine's Quill, with 33 illustrations and an introduction by Alberto Manguel. Cheshire Cat Press has now issued a deluxe, larger edition in hardcover, with a foreword by Andy Malcolm and the original preface by Joseph Brabant. "The delicacy and intelligence of George Walker's printmaking seems to have come to us from a bygone age."—Neil Gaiman.



ARTICLES & ACADEMIA

Moheb Costandi's "The Curious Case of Alice in Wonderland Syndrome," adapted from his book *Body Am I: The New Science of Self-Consciousness* (MIT Press, 2022), appears on the MIT Press Reader website.

Arnold Hirshon's "Arnold, Art, Artificial Intelligence, Alice—and Books," which appears in *FABS*, the Journal of the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies, Vol. XXVII, no. 1 (Spring 2023), discusses the art of the *Alice* books and the potential impact of AI on future illustrated editions, based on his own experiments.

AUCTIONS

An auction at Swords of the UK ending April 23 listed eight photographs taken and printed by Carroll. They were each estimated at around £1,000–£1,500 (\$1,250–\$1,885), but sold for £9,450–£16,550 GBP (\$11,872–\$20,792) apiece!

On April 4, The Potomack Company sold a group of four 1875 CLD letters relating to his photographic portraits of the family of Rev. James Thresher for \$7,000 and the boxed set of *Tenniel's Wood-Engraved Illustrations to 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' and 'Through the Looking Glass'* (Macmillan, 1998) for \$4,750.

A 7-page silver-printed hand-colored color guide by Marie Severin for the classic "Alice in Wonderland" parody (first published in *MAD* #18, 1954) for Russ Cochran's color *MAD* EC Library project (1986) sold for \$120 on Cochran's auction site on March 30.

On May 3, Heritage Auctions sold the original art for a Frederick Burr Op-
per "Alice in Plunderland" editorial cartoon (*KL*

101:51) from the 1920s whose text box began "She meets the Borogove, the Mome Rath, the Wallagus, the Spotted Mook, and other strange creatures" for \$1,920 (including buyer's premium).

BOOKS

The award-winning 2015 YA novel *Once Upon a Zombie: Book One: The Color of Fear* by Billy Phillips and Jenny Nissenson mashes up *Wonderland* and zombies.

Clark and Lourine Gist's *Alice in God's Wonderland* (Christian Faith Publishing, 2018) is an adaptation of the tale with the addition of some characters, considerable evangelizing, and, for some reason, a name for the Cheshire Cat ("Cheddar"). It's for kids. The color illustrations are fun and rather cartoony, albeit uncredited.

Liisan seikkailut Ihmemaassa, a new translation of *Wonderland* into Finnish by Nana Sirone, was just published by Herta. It is unillustrated except for the cover and frontispiece, which are by Mia Minerva and are also available as a bookmark or sheet of stickers.

Pictured Worlds: Masterpieces of Children's Book Art by 101 Essential Illustrators from Around the World by Leonard S. Marcus (Abrams, 2023) contains a write-up on Guess Who.



COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS

The somewhat darkly themed but still readable *Alice Ever After* by Dan Panosian, art by Giorgio Spalletta (KL 108:55) collects #s 1–5 in one volume (Boom!, 2023).

Sherlock Holmes & The Wonderland Conundrum by Chuck Suffel, art by J. Schiek, is a b&w (with occasional spots of red) mashup of two worlds (What'cha Reading Press, 2022).



EVENTS, EXHIBITS & PLACES

Petaluma Collects at the Petaluma (CA) Art Center (Jan. 19–Mar. 10) featured several different collections, one of which included a number of large Wonderland-related prints hanging on a wall. The fact that they belonged to Mark Burstein, the husband of the exhibit's curator, Llisa Demetrios, was no doubt coincidental.

Jessie Luke's "A Journey to Wonderland" was at the Zoe Galloway Gallery in Quincy, FL, Feb. 17–Apr. 15. "Inspired by John Tenniel's original drawing illustrations, the artist used handcrafted props, costumes, masks, and building structures to create the set and Carroll's iconic characters like the Cheshire Cat. Luke then captured her photographs with a plastic toy camera, called the Holga, which uses black-and-white 120 film and is known for its low-fidelity aesthetic. The simplicity of this 'cheap' plastic camera produces unpredictable results and unique effects like intense vignetting and distortion, allowing Luke to convey the dreamlike, unreal qualities of Alice's Journey."

Children's Fairyland in Oakland, CA, home of the Alice in Wonderland Tunnel among other attractions, held, somewhat ironically, an adults-only, costume-optional Mad Tea Party on April 1, with alcohol-infused mar-TEA-nis and a DJ for dancing.

On May 11 and 12, the fledgling Cleveland Ballet debuted a new ballet, *Alice*, which it commissioned from former Joffrey Ballet member and choreographer Margo Sappington, at Playhouse Square's Ohio Theatre.

The We Players troupe's highly interactive and well-reviewed *Adventures with Alice* took place in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco April 27 through May 29.

Next time you're in Cracow, Poland, be sure to visit Efemeria, a Wonderland-themed café.



INTERNET & TECHNOLOGY

BBC Culture polled 177 book experts from 56 countries in order to find the greatest children's books ever. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* came in at number two, just behind the picture-book *Where the Wild Things Are*, in results published on the BBC website on May 23, 2023.

On March 26, as part of the New England Book Artists' speaker series over Zoom, Vladimir Zimakov talked about the process of working on his fine-press edition of *Haddock's Eyes* (KL 109:80).



MOVIES & TELEVISION

In "Paper Hearts" (Season 4 Episode 10, aired Dec. 15, 1996) of *The X-Files*, Mulder finds John Lee Roche's "trophy" (cloth hearts cut out of the pajamas of children he murdered) inside a copy of *Alice in Wonderland*. Roche was also referred to as the "Mad Hatter" and was said to live on 9809 Alice Road. Mulder finds "mad hat" carved into a stone near a burial site, which leads him on the quest.

Netflix's *Dash and Lily* Episode 3, "Hannukah," aired Nov. 10, 2020. "In an attempt to make Lily embrace her weird side and come into her own, Dash gives her a flyer to a secret concert for a 'Jewcore' punk band.

His flyer is attached to the notebook hidden [on] the Alice in Wonderland statue [in Central Park]."

The science-fiction horror-comedy film *M3GAN* (Universal Studios, 2022) has a scene in which M3GAN, a humanoid bot, reads *Wonderland* to nine-year-old Cady as her bedtime story. Things don't end well.



MUSIC

A new *Alice in Wonderland* musical played at the 92nd St. Y, now yclept 92NY Center for Culture & Arts, Feb. 12, 19, and 26, and featured Wonderland versions of game shows.



PERFORMING ARTS

Imagine Ballet Theatre of Ogden, UT, presented a full-length ballet, *Alice: Adventures in Wonderland*, on May 12th and 13th at the Allred Theater at Weber State University.

In Tampa, FL, an ensemble of seven performers in Jobsite Theater's *ALICE* employs song, choreography, aerial acrobatics, and puppets to perform a "weird and somewhat twisted" interpretation at the David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Performing Arts, May 10 through June 4.



THINGS

Alice in Wonderland: Remake the Classic Fairy Tale (Story Box), illustrated by Anne Laval (Laurence King, 2019, 978-1786274793). "There are 20 double-sided puzzle cards in the box. There is no fixed order between the cards. You can freely splice pictures and write storylines arbitrarily. The characters in *Alice in Wonderland* traveled to modern times and experienced a story that was even crazier than the original! The White Rabbit wears Converse shoes and runs a hotdog stand, the Cheshire Cat turns into a dodgy taxi driver, and the Queen of Hearts drives a pink stretch limousine! If you use all the cards, you can also make a story eight feet long!"

THE FUNNY PAGES

Liniers, Macanudo, February 14, 2023



Dean Young, Blondie, January 4, 2023

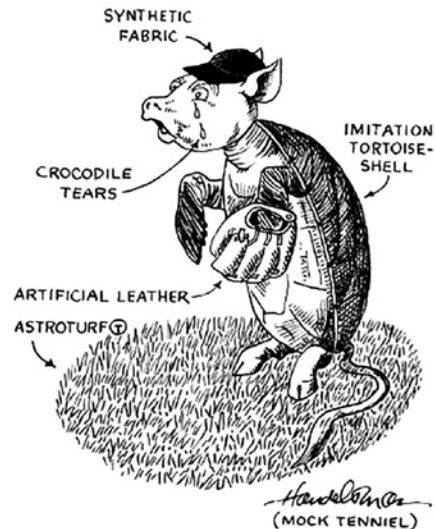


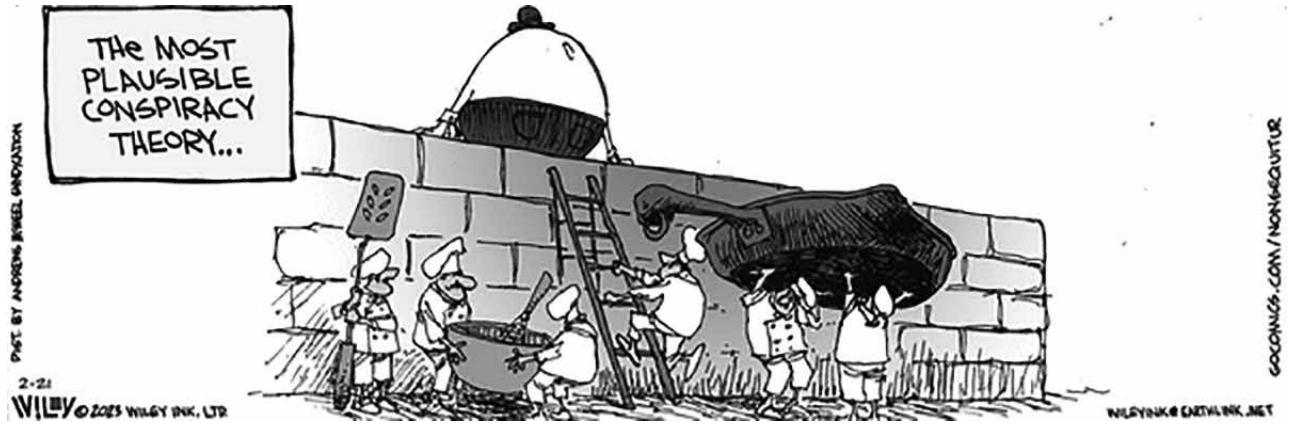
Mark Anderson, Andertoons, n/d



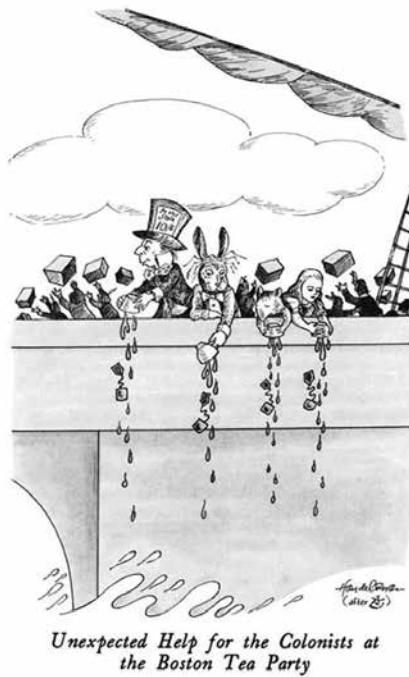
"You've got a little something right here."

J. B. Handelsman, The New Yorker, n/d

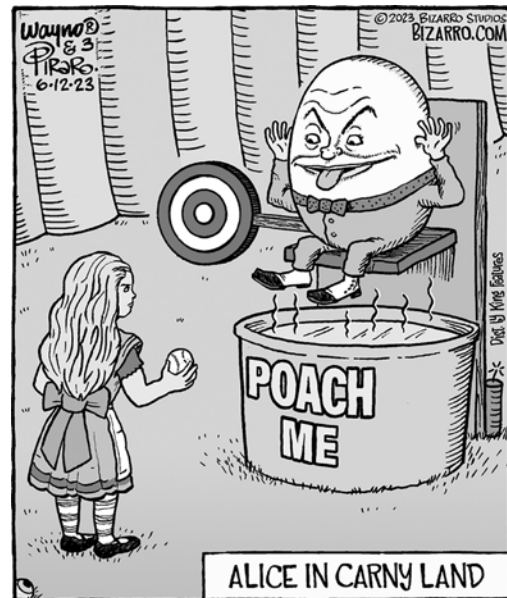




J. B. Handelsman, The New Yorker, n/d



Wayno and Piraro, Bizarro, June 12, 2023



Liniers, Macanudo, December 10, 2022



